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TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS



# TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

*Ch'eng Ming-tao and Ch'eng Yi-ch'uan*

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abbreviations . . . . .	vii
Preface . . . . .	ix
General Introduction . . . . .	xiii
 PART I. The Philosophy of Ch'êng Yi-ch'u'an	
Introduction . . . . .	3
1 <i>Li</i> (Principle) . . . . .	8
2 <i>Ming</i> (Decree) . . . . .	23
3 <i>Ch'i</i> (Ether) . . . . .	31
4 <i>Hsing</i> (Nature) . . . . .	44
5 <i>Hsin</i> (Mind) . . . . .	61
6 <i>Ch'êng</i> (Integrity), <i>Ching</i> (Composure) . . . . .	67
7 <i>Kê-wu</i> (Investigation of Things) . . . . .	74
8 Criticism of Buddhism . . . . .	83
 PART II. The Philosophy of Ch'êng Ming-tao	
Introduction . . . . .	95
1 <i>Jén</i> (Benevolence) . . . . .	96
2 <i>Yi</i> (The Changes), <i>Shên</i> (Psychic) . . . . .	108
3 Monism and Dualism . . . . .	119
4 Good and Evil . . . . .	127
5 Ming-tao on the Nature . . . . .	131
 APPENDICES	
1 Works of the Ch'êng Brothers . . . . .	141
2 Chou Tun-yi and the Beginnings of Neo-Confucianism . . . . .	152
3 The Connexion between Chang Tsai and the Ch'êng Brothers . . . . .	176
4 Bibliography . . . . .	179
5 Selective Index of Technical Terms . . . . .	187
6 Index of Proper Names . . . . .	189



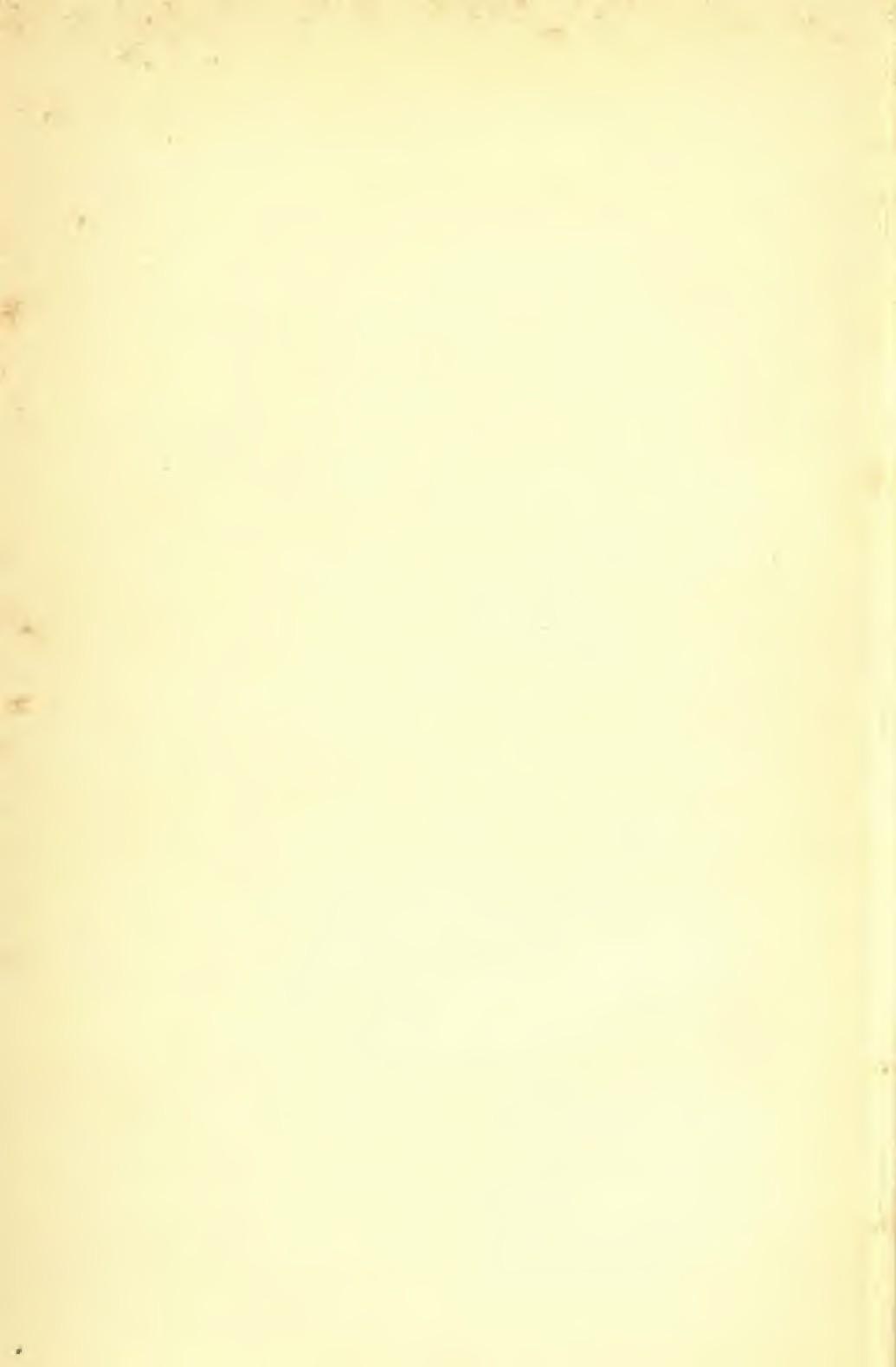
## ABBREVIATIONS

### *Works of the Ch'êng Brothers*

YS	<i>Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih yi-shu</i> 河南程氏遺書 BSS.
ECCS	<i>Êrh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu</i> 二程全書 SPPY.
WS	<i>Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih wai-shu</i> 外書 ECCS.
WC	<i>Wên-chi</i> 文集, including MTWC. <i>Ming-tao wên-chi</i> 明道文集 ECCS. YCWC. <i>Yi-ch'uán wên-chi</i> 伊川文集 ECCS.
YC	<i>Yi-ch'uán Yi-chuan</i> 伊川易傳 ECCS.
CS	<i>Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih ching-shuo</i> 經說 ECCS.
TY	<i>Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih ts'ui-yen</i> 粹言 ECCS.

### *Other Abbreviations*

BSS	Basic Sinological Series. 國學基本叢書
CLHC	<i>Chou Lien-hsi chi</i> 周濂溪集 BSS.
CSL	<i>Chin-ssü lu</i> 近思錄 <i>Sentetsu Icho Kanseki Kokujikai Zensho</i> 先哲遺著漢籍國字解全書
CTCS	<i>Chang-tzü ch'üan-shu</i> 張子全書 BSS.
L	Legge, James: <i>The Chinese Classics</i> , 2nd edition.
SKCS	<i>Ssü-k'u ch'üan-shu</i> 四庫全書
SKCSTM	<i>Ssü-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao</i> 總目提要 <i>Kuang-tung shu-chü</i> , 1868.
SPPY	<i>Ssü-pu pei-yao</i> 四部備要
SPTK	<i>Ssü-pu ts'ung-k'an</i> 四部叢刊
SYHA	<i>Sung Yüan hsüeh-an</i> 宋元學案, BSS.
T	<i>Tzü</i> 字
TSCC	<i>Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'êng</i> 叢書集成
YL	<i>Chu-tzü yü-lei</i> 朱子語類, <i>Ying-yüan shu-yüan</i> , 1872.
?	After a saying of the Ch'êngs, indicates that it is not recorded which brother is the speaker.



## PREFACE

The Chinese thinkers best known in Europe, those of 500–200 B.C., are moralists, mystics, and political theorists rather than philosophers. Scholars have paid much less attention to the Neo-Confucian philosophers of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960–1279); in particular, no one has yet published a comprehensive account in a Western language of the work of the brothers Ch'êng Ming-tao and Ch'êng Yi-ch'uan, who have good claims to be considered the most creative of the Sung philosophers. Yet a European who turns to Chinese thought in the hope of learning to see his own philosophical tradition in perspective, of discovering that concepts he has accepted as necessities of thought are merely preconceptions of his own civilization, is likely to gain more from the Sung school than from the ancient thinkers. Although the Neo-Confucians do not engage in the rigorous logical demonstrations expected of philosophers in Europe, they do build metaphysical systems out of concepts different from ours, and different in ways which are often unexpected and illuminating.

Joseph Needham, in the second volume of his *Science and Civilization in China*, argues that the main line of development in Chinese philosophy is towards a “philosophy of organism” which the Neo-Confucians perfected. On the whole I agree with this generalization, and the present book contains many illustrations of the Chinese tendency to think in terms of the interdependent rather than the isolated, of wholes divisible in various ways rather than collections of units, of opposites as complementary rather than contradictory, of the changing (but changing in recurring cycles, not developing) rather than the static, of the functions of things rather than their qualities, of mutual stimulation and response rather than effect following cause. Needham's views on this point are not, as some may suspect, simply a projection of Whitehead's philosophy on to China. Such ways of thought are also prominent in twentieth-century science, and have occasionally led to startlingly similar results in China and in Europe — for example, the conception of the mind as a whole responding in various ways to stimulation, taken for granted in China for two

thousand years or more, but achieved in Europe only when the Gestalt school broke the old habit of conceiving the mind as a collection of separate thoughts, emotions, and desires.

What is the significance of such parallels? In the case of psychology, it can hardly be claimed that China was ahead of Europe; but the Chinese started with the synthetic approach, while Europeans turned to it only when the analytic approach to which they were accustomed ceased to account for the accumulating data. I doubt whether it is fair to say (as Needham sometimes seems to imply) that Chinese science somehow outran Europe in theory while falling behind in practice. The habit of thinking in terms of the interdependent rather than the isolated is not scientific in itself; it is an approach which has no doubt become more and more fruitful in the twentieth century, but which might conceivably have hindered science at other phases of its development. It is natural that a philosophical tradition independent of Europe should retain much that we have left behind, and also explore ways of thinking for which we have not yet or only recently found uses (for the most part different uses), giving the Westerner who expects every civilization to follow the course of his own the deceptive impression that this alien philosophy is an incongruous mixture of primitive and modern. In any case, for the purposes of this book, it is healthier to stress the differences rather than the similarities between China and Europe. The similarities are obvious, and tempt us to misunderstand Chinese ideas by assimilating them to obsolete or modern ideas of our own, in the former case groundlessly disparaging or apologizing for them, and in the latter paying them empty compliments. The differences are more elusive, but when grasped are more stimulating, since they bring unconscious presuppositions of our own to the surface.

One purpose of this book is to make the thought of the Ch'êng brothers available to the general reader; specialist problems have therefore been relegated to the notes and appendices, in which no attempt is made to be intelligible except to sinologists. The scope of the book is confined to the philosophy of the Ch'êngs and to their relation to each other and to earlier and later Neo-Confucians. Among the subjects left out of account are the political background of Neo-Confucianism and the extent to which it was influenced by Buddhism. The Sung philosophers were strongly opposed to the programme of Wang An-shih, the greatest reformer in medieval Chinese history, and the earliest Neo-Confucian schools (those of

## PREFACE

Chang Tsai in Kuanchung and of the Ch'êngs in Loyang) were formed immediately after the opposition of Chang Tsai and Ch'êng Ming-tao had led to their dismissal from office. I know too little about the history of the Sung dynasty to decide to what extent their conservative politics and their philosophy are connected. As for the connexion between Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism, I have mentioned only what lies on the surface, being equally ignorant of Chinese Buddhism.

Apart from the chapter notes, footnotes are supplied, giving cross-references when a point is raised which is treated more fully elsewhere. The romanization used is that of Wade, but writing *yi* for *i*.

Chinese are always called by the surname and personal name, except for the Ch'êng brothers themselves, who are given their posthumous names Ming-tao and Yi-ch'u'an. The reason for making this exception is simply that when they are known as Ch'êng Hao and Ch'êng Yi it is difficult to remember which is which.

References to Chinese sources are to *chiüan* 裳 (when the pages are separately numbered), to page, and generally to line. With editions printed in the Western fashion, without a regular number of columns, the line indicated is that of the main text, ignoring headings and notes. Although other references have been left to the chapter notes, those to sayings and writings of the Ch'êngs have been given immediately after the passages quoted. It was felt that anyone reading with the Chinese text at hand will prefer not to have to turn over pages whenever he wishes to find the original.

An earlier draft of this book was presented as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of London University in June 1953. It has been revised with the help of new material found during a year's study leave in Hongkong and Japan in 1954-5. I should like to express my gratitude to the School of Oriental and African Studies for granting and financing this study leave and for making possible the publication of this book by a subsidy; to the late Professor E. D. Edwards, who supervised the preparation of the thesis; to Professor Enoki of the Tôyô Bunko, Tokyo, for his help in introducing me to Japanese libraries; and to the many people who have given me useful suggestions, including Professor W. Simon, Dr A. D. Waley, Mr Gordon Downer, Mr J. Y. Liu, and Mr J. W. M'Ewen. I owe a special debt to Mr D. C. Lau, for many stimulating conversations about philosophy in general and Chinese philosophy in particular, and for correcting many of my translations.



## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

There are two great periods in the history of Chinese thought, the latter part of the Chou dynasty (c.500–221 B.C.) and the Sung (A.D. 960–1279). The former is the period when the old feudal order collapsed under the pressure of continued internecine wars, and the effort to restore a disintegrating society produced a rich variety of conflicting ways of thought – the practical moralism of the Confucians, the mysticism of the Taoists, Mo-tzü's doctrine of universal love, the individualism of Yang Chu, the logical analysis of Kung-sun Lung, the cosmology of the Yin-Yang and Five Elements schools, the Legalist conception of a state founded on objective law. The philosophical activity of the Warring Kingdoms ended with the restoration of stability under the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) and the consolidation of a centralized bureaucracy in the place of the feudal nobles. Confucianism became the doctrine of the new ruling class, and all its rivals, with the exception of Taoism, soon disappeared.

The Neo-Confucianism of the Sung dynasty was produced by quite different conditions. The Confucian bureaucracy established under the Han was not finally dislodged until the present century; but from the first centuries A.D. it felt itself threatened by the spread of Buddhism, which it accused of denying the loyalties to family and Emperor on which the established order depended. Buddhism brought from India a metaphysical system more advanced than anything hitherto known in China, the influence of which soon pervaded the thought even of its enemies, and this eventually stimulated the Confucians to produce a system capable of competing with it. The motive of the new movement was thus conservative, the need to find intellectual foundations for values which had been called in question. These it sought in the past, in the Confucian Classics of the Chou dynasty, claiming that for a thousand years their true meaning had been obscured by the influence of Buddhism and Taoism.<sup>1</sup> The attitude of the Neo-Confucians to the Classics was that of the medieval scholastic to the Bible and Aristotle; they conceived their mission as the discovery, not of a new philosophy, but of the forgotten teaching of canonical texts.

However, this attitude is not incompatible with profound originality, especially since the authorities on which they imagined themselves to depend allow much more latitude than those recognized by the medieval schoolmen. The only Classics which contain much philosophy are the *Book of Changes*, a manual of divination by the manipulation of sixty-four hexagrams (diagrams composed of six broken or unbroken lines), with appendices traditionally but wrongly ascribed to Confucius himself; and the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*, two sections of the *Book of Rites*, a collection of writings on ritual. In practice most of the quotations even from these Classics over which the Neo-Confucians fought, are so ambiguous that the competing schools seldom had any difficulty in reading their original ideas into them. Fortunately, the works of the two most important Confucian thinkers of the Warring Kingdoms, Mencius (fourth-third centuries B.C.) and Hsün-tzü (third century B.C.), were not among the Twelve Classics recognized at the beginning of the Sung dynasty. The Neo-Confucians were therefore free to take a more independent attitude towards them, rejecting Hsün-tzü but approving Mencius, who was included under their influence among the Thirteen Classics recognized since the Sung dynasty.

The thinkers of the Warring Kingdoms were not interested in system-building, and therefore leave many Europeans uncertain whether they deserve the title of "philosopher" at all. Their main interest for us is perhaps that they express such an astonishing variety of possible attitudes to life, egoism and universal love, mysticism and the cult of political power. On the other hand the Sung philosophers express only a single attitude, that of traditional Confucianism, which sets its face against all inward spiritual exploration, against all enquiries about the world of spirits and the life after death, and insists that the whole duty of man is to act morally as a member of society, observing the responsibilities laid down in the Classics for father and son, ruler and minister, husband and wife, elder and younger, friend and friend. What makes the Sung philosophers important is their attempt to support this view of man's place in the world by a unified world-picture as coherent as that of Buddhism. Confucianism had always worked with a number of separate concepts without finding it necessary to explain how they are related — the Way (*tao*), the path along which the world and man move; heaven (*t'ien*), a semi-personal power which rules the universe by its decree (*ming*) as the Emperor

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

rules men; the mind (*hsin*), which controls the body; the nature (*hsing*), the raw state of man, which according to Mencius is good and according to Hsün-tzü is bad. The great achievement of the Neo-Confucians was to create a system in which all the old concepts have a place, treating all concrete things as modifications of ether (*ch'i*) out of which they condense, and the Way, heaven and the nature as different aspects of a single principle (*li*) by which things are united.

The Confucian revival which culminated in the Sung is generally considered to date from a writer of the immediately preceding T'ang dynasty, Han Yü (768–824). But for the first two and a half centuries this movement confined itself to defence of the values embodied in the Classics against the Buddhists and Taoists, who withdrew from the world seeking mystical illumination instead of serving as filial sons and loyal ministers. Even the polemical Confucians of the early Sung, of whom those who most influenced the coming philosophical revival were Fan Chung-yen (989–1052) and Hu Yüan (993–1059), had no interest in metaphysics. During the same period such men as Liu Mu (fl. 1040), Shao Yung (1011–1073), and Chou Tun-yi (1017–1073), were speculating on the evolution of the cosmos from a primal unit, the Supreme Ultimate (*t'ai-chi*).<sup>\*</sup> But these thinkers continued the tradition of Confucianism influenced by Taoism against which Han Yü had revolted; they were not concerned with the defence of orthodoxy, and the charts and numerical calculations with which they worked were said to have been derived from the Taoist Ch'én T'uán (died 989). The combination of militant orthodoxy and philosophical speculation which characterizes Neo-Confucianism is first seen in the brothers Ch'êng Hao (1032–1085) and Ch'êng Yi (1033–1107) of Loyang (who will be called by their posthumous names Ming-tao and Yi-ch'uán), and in their father's cousin Chang Tsai (1020–1077) of Kuanchung (Shensi).†

Since we are concerned only with the ideas of the Ch'êng brothers, it is not necessary to give more than a brief outline of their lives.<sup>2</sup> In 1046–7 they received instruction from Chou Tun-yi, without recognizing him formally as their teacher.‡ (They were also acquainted for a long period with Shao Yung, who was their neighbour at Loyang.) After this Ming-tao studied the rival schools of the Warring Kingdoms, Taoism and Buddhism, for "nearly ten years", eventually returning to the Confucian Classics.<sup>3</sup> His brother attended the

\* pp.153–6      † Appendix 2      ‡ pp.160–2

academy at the capital (*kuo-tzü chien* 國子監), where he won the attention of Hu Yuan, one of the leaders of the orthodox school. It was at the beginning of the Chia-yu period (1056–1063), when all three were in the capital taking the examinations by which the Chinese bureaucracy was recruited, that the brothers first met their kinsman Chang Tsai, who had been introduced to the *Doctrine of the Mean* by the orthodox scholar Fan Chung-yen, and who (like Ming-tao) had recently returned to Confucianism after sowing his wild oats in Taoism and Buddhism. In 1057 Ming-tao and Chang Tsai graduated in the *chin-shih* 進士 examination and set out on their official careers; Yi-ch'uan was unsuccessful and withdrew into obscurity.<sup>4</sup>

For some years Ming-tao rose steadily in the official hierarchy, beginning as keeper of records at Hu in Shensi, finally achieving the post of censor at the capital (1069–70), where he is said to have favourably impressed the Emperor. At this time the reformer Wang An-shih was carrying out a radical programme against the bitter opposition of the orthodox scholars. Ming-tao and Chang Tsai both resisted the new measures and were dismissed. The latter returned to Kuanchung and formed the first Neo-Confucian school; Ming-tao, after continuing for some time to serve in minor offices under Wang An-shih, joined his brother at Loyang, where they formed a circle of disciples like Chang Tsai's and taught together for "nearly ten years"<sup>5</sup> until Ming-tao's death in 1085.

The policy of Wang An-shih was repudiated on the accession of the Emperor Chê-tsung (1085–1100). Yi-ch'uan, who, as an unsuccessful candidate, had previously held no office but had acquired a great reputation among the conservative faction, was made tutor of the young Emperor (1086–7). He soon returned to his disciples at Loyang, the honour having served merely to make him a victim when the reformers regained the ascendancy. From 1097 to 1100 he was exiled to Fu-chou in Szechuan; in 1103, again feeling himself to be in danger, he disbanded his disciples and soon afterwards died (1107).

Since metaphysics had so far been the preserve of Buddhists and Taoists, the Neo-Confucians were forced to build with materials borrowed from the enemy. The chief of these was the assumption that behind the movement, change, and multiplicity of the visible world there is something still, unchanging and one, which man can discover in the ground of his own heart. According to Buddhism, the

multiple world perceived by the senses is illusion, and we can learn to see through it by meditation leading to an illumination which frees us from the senses. Confucians, on the other hand, valued, not solitary meditation, but moral action in the world which Buddhists supposed to be illusion. In order to adapt the idea of the One behind the Many to their own purposes, it was necessary to purge it of all mysticism, to show that man realizes his unity with the world by acting morally as a member of society.

The schools of the eleventh century explored two conflicting conceptions of the underlying One, which their successors in the twelfth century tried to reconcile. The first conception is monistic, assuming that all things are one in that all emerge from a common source, imperceptible yet continuous with them, like the underground spring from which the stream flows and divides, or the buried root from which the tree grows and branches out.\* This viewpoint is associated with a tendency to nature mysticism† of the sort which Taoism and Zen Buddhism inspired in Chinese poetry and painting, a sympathy with all vitality and growth, the sense of a mystery active in the generation of things and within one's own heart. The other approach is dualistic, seeking a single principle running through all things like the grain in wood but different in kind from the ether of which they are composed. This approach is purely moral and intellectual; principles are followed by acting morally, and extended by thought from the known to the unknown. Both of these tendencies have a long history in Chinese philosophy; even in the *Tao-té-ching*, the Taoist classic traditionally held to have been written by Lao-tzū in the sixth century B.C. but probably written three hundred years later, the Way (*tao*) is conceived both as a path or principle which the world follows and as the source out of which it emerges.

The Confucian-Taoist syncretists of the early Sung conceive the One behind the Many as a source, the Supreme Ultimate out of which things are continually dividing. They do not quite escape a tendency to value "stillness", withdrawal into the source within oneself, at the expense of action; thus Chou Tun-yi declares that "the sage, settling affairs according to the mean, correctness, benevolence and duty, makes stillness the ruling consideration."‡ Of the first Neo-Confucians proper, Chang Tsai continues to think in terms of a generative source, although he prefers to conceive it as infinitely rarefied ether out of

\* pp.20, 51      † p.109f      ‡ p.165

which solid things condense and into which they dissolve like ice in water, the Supreme Void (*t'ai-hsü*, more literally the "Supremely Rarefied").\* But the Ch'êng brothers, in particular Yi-ch'uan, break radically with this tradition, replacing the Supreme Ultimate by Principle (*li*). Ch'êng Ming-tao does not see all the implications of this change of viewpoint, and remains a monist; but his brother, Yi-ch'uan, advances to a consistent dualism, holding that Principle is not simply more rarefied or harder to discern than the ether composing concrete things, but different in kind, perceived by the mind while ether is perceived by the senses.†

According to the Ch'êng brothers Principle is present within man as his unchanging nature, and right action is action in accordance with his nature. Ming-tao assumes that one can discover moral principle within oneself without needing to be taught it. Hence, although he rejects the Taoist ideal of "stillness" in favour of "stability"‡ which can be preserved either in stillness or in action, he still takes it for granted that we discover the underlying One by looking back into ourselves. Yi-ch'uan breaks with this tradition also. He holds that, although the same Principle runs through the self and the outside world, within us it is obscured by the ether of which we are composed, so that a better course than introspection is the "Investigation of Things", the study of external things, people and affairs in order to discover the principles which they follow or should follow.

The Ch'êng school of Loyang is the ancestor of all later Neo-Confucianism. After Chang Tsai's death in 1077 his rival school of Kuanchung dispersed, and several of the members went to study under the Ch'êngs. The disciples of the latter took the opportunity to assert that everything valuable in Chang Tsai's teaching had been borrowed from the Ch'êng brothers, and this view remained undisputed until the present century.|| Consequently, Chang Tsai's system, although of great interest in itself, had little influence on later Neo-Confucianism. A much stronger influence was the revived teaching of Chou Tun-yi. Chou Tun-yi had been almost unknown in the eleventh century; but the Ch'êngs had visited him in their youth, and during the twelfth century his works began to circulate among their disciples. The Supreme Ultimate reappears by the side of Principle in the writings of Hu Hung, who studied under the Ch'êng disciples Hou Chung-liang and Yang Shih (1053–1135). Li T'ung (1093–1163),

\* p.121      † pp.14–16      ‡ p.102      || Appendix 3

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

whose teacher Lo Ts'ung-yen (1072-1135) studied under Ch'êng Yi-ch'uan and Yang Shih, identifies the Supreme Ultimate with Principle.\* Thus the rival conceptions of source and principle are combined, although the Supreme Ultimate takes second place; the basic terms in the philosophy are still Principle and Ether.

Li T'ung's disciple Chu Hsi (1130-1200) is the most famous of the Neo-Confucians. His commentaries on the Classics, reinterpreting them in the light of the new philosophy, were officially accepted for the examinations by which the Chinese bureaucracy was selected, giving his doctrines the status of orthodoxy right down to the end of the Imperial regime in 1911. However, although Chu Hsi polished the system he inherited from his predecessors, bringing out its dualism by clarifying the relations between Principle and Ether, and exploring the implications of the identification of Principle and the Supreme Ultimate, he added nothing significant of his own. The truly creative figure in the movement is Ch'êng Yi-ch'uan, and if one measures the greatness of a philosopher by the originality of his contribution together with the extent of his influence, there can be little question that he is the greatest Confucian thinker of the last two thousand years. In all essentials (except for the absence of the Supreme Ultimate), the philosophy examined in this book is that which is hardly extinct among old-fashioned Chinese scholars even at the present day.

Although Chu Hsi never concealed his debt to the Ch'êng brothers, he obscured their importance by a misunderstanding of the origins of Neo-Confucianism which has lasted as long as the authority of Chu Hsi himself. Because Chou Tun-yi was the earliest of the thinkers who contributed to Neo-Confucianism, Chu Hsi treated him as its founder, failing to realize that Chou Tun-yi was not a militant Confucian but a Confucian-Taoist syncretist, that his influence was not felt until after the death of the Ch'êng brothers, and that it added nothing to their system except the Supreme Ultimate. The fact that the Ch'êng brothers had visited Chou Tun-yi in their adolescence, and the mistaken tradition that they were the source of Chang Tsai's ideas, deluded him into supposing that the whole Neo-Confucian philosophy had been handed down from Chou Tun-yi.†

From the twelfth century onwards, the chief controversial issue within Neo-Confucianism was the "Investigation of Things". The

\* p.163      † Appendix 2

orthodox school of Chu Hsi maintained, with Yi-ch'uan, that we learn morality by studying the external world. But Lu Chiu-yüan (1139–1192) and later Wang Shou-jen (1472–1528) reverted to the view that in order to discover moral principle it is enough to look into one's own conscience. They justified this position by a new form of monism, denounced by the orthodox as Buddhist, which, accepting the claim that morality is learned by the Investigation of Things, argued that all things are within the mind. At the other extreme Tai Chén (1723–1777) asserted that principle is merely the structure of the ether, and that even Chu Hsi, since he treated Principle as a mysterious entity transcending the ether, was contaminated by Buddhism. But neither of these rival currents could break the authority of Chu Hsi, which was officially recognized until the Revolution of 1911.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Of the independent thinkers of the Warring Kingdoms, the only one who may have had a certain influence on the Neo-Confucians was Mo-tzū. Although they repeat the traditional objection that love should not be indiscriminate but should observe the degrees of relationship, they seem to have been a little touchy about the fact that their own conception of benevolence as awareness that we are one with all things is not so very different from Mo-tzū's "universal love". Han Yü had written an *Essay on Reading Mo-tzū* (*Han Ch'ang-li chi* 3/74), in which he claimed that there is no contradiction between the ideas of Mo-tzū and Confucius. Yi-ch'uan thought that the point of the essay was good but that it was a little too tolerant of Mo-tzū's errors. He observed:

"Mencius says that Mo-tzū loves his elder brother's son no more than his neighbour's son. Where does Mo-tzū say anything of the kind in his book? But Mencius was 'pulling up the roots and stopping the source', knowing that as it degenerated the doctrine would certainly be carried to this extreme."

(YS, 254/9-14)

Chang Tsai once used Mo-tzū's term "universal love" (*chien ai* 羲愛 CTCS 41/5), and his *West Inscription* was attacked by Yang Shih as tending towards monism. Yi-ch'uan defended it (YCWC, 5/12B/1-7); their correspondence is printed together in CTCS, 9-10n and *Yang Kuei-shan chi* (complete) 16/6A-8B.

<sup>2</sup> The primary sources for the lives of the Ch'êng brothers are: *Report of the Acts of Ming-tao* (YCWC, 7/1A-7A), written by Yi-ch'uan in 1085.

*Year-table of Yi-ch'uan* (YS, 370-377) by Chu Hsi, who published it in the supplement to the *Yi-shu* in 1168.

*Biography of Ch'êng Hao* and *Biography of Ch'êng Yi* (*Yuan-yen chi* 3/53B-55B).

The documents from the "veritable records" on which the biographies in the *Sung History* are based.

*Epitaph on Ch'êng Po-ch'un* (*Ming-tao*) (*Nan-yang chi* 29/26A-34B), by Han Wei.

<sup>3</sup> YCWC, 7/6A/12. According to the epitaph on Ming-tao by Han Wei (*Nan-yang chi* 29/33B/9-34A/1), "there was not a book that he did not read;

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

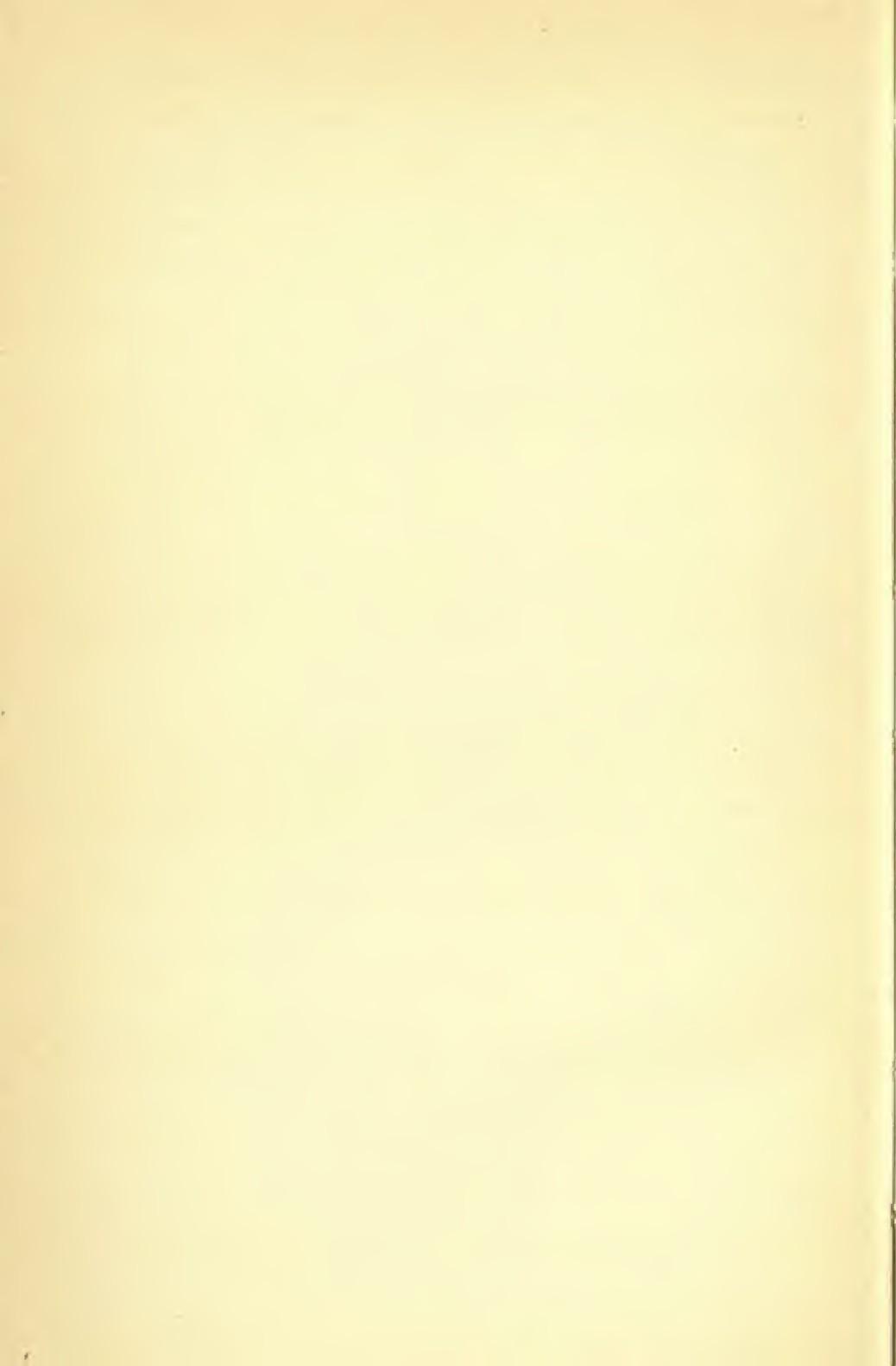
the Buddhists, Lao-tzü, Chuang-tzü, Lieh-tzü, he thought his way to the bottom of all of them in order to know their ideas, but he ended up in the Way of our sages."

Yi-ch'uan also "had many conversations with Zen Buddhists in his youth, wishing to observe how profound their learning was; afterwards he gave up these inquiries" (YS, 68/4). Letters and sayings addressed to a certain Yi-ch'uan by the Zen monk Ling Yüan are preserved in the *Ling Yüan ho-shang pi-yü* 3-5, and the *Ch'an-lin pao-hsin* 1023/B14-26. From these Lin K'o-t'ang (39-41) draws the incredible conclusion that Ch'eng Yi-ch'uan was receiving instruction in Buddhism both before and after his exile to Fu-chou, one of his periods of greatest activity as a Confucian teacher.

But the Yi-ch'uan who corresponded with Ling Yüan is mentioned by Chu Hsi, who says that, although confused by some with Ch'eng Yi-ch'uan, he was in fact a certain P'an Ch'un. (YL, 126/33B/8-34A/8)

\* MTWC, 1/1A/13. CTCS, 312/2.

† YS, 365/2, 366/4.



PART I

THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN



## PART I. INTRODUCTION

The Ch'êng brothers left only a few writings, the chief of which is Yi-ch'u'an's commentary on the *Book of Changes*. Their philosophy is known to us mainly through the sayings recorded by their disciples, who did not always indicate which brother was the speaker. Until recently it was assumed that both shared the same ideas, those of the tradition which we may call "objectivist", according to which we discover moral principle by studying external things. But modern scholars, for example Fêng Yu-lan and Ch'én Chung-fan, agree that there were considerable differences between them, and that in some ways Ming-tao is closer to the "subjectivist" school, according to which we can learn to distinguish right and wrong merely by looking into our own consciences. The absence of contemporary references to these differences may be explained by the piety of disciples and by the fact that, although later they led to bitter controversy, in the thought of the Ch'êngs they were hardly more than differences of emphasis. In any case the brothers taught together for less than ten years, ended by Ming-tao's death (1085), and Yi-ch'u'an's characteristic views are most prominent in the sayings of the remaining twenty-two years of his life.

The monism and subjectivism of Ming-tao are not his own inventions; they are implicit in predecessors such as Chou Tun-yi and in his contemporary Chang Tsai, although it was only in reaction against the rise of dualism and the "Investigation of Things" that it became necessary for later thinkers to push them to the forefront. What distinguishes Ming-tao from his predecessors is his replacement of the Supreme Ultimate by Principle, on which point there is no difference between him and his brother, except that the latter draws conclusions from it which undermine monism and subjectivism. Indeed, there is one saying of Ming-tao which suggests that he began to think in terms of Principle before his brother:

"Although some of my doctrines were taken from others, the two words 'Heaven's principle' are the fruit of my own experience."

(WS, 12/4A/9)

From this point of view we may regard Yi-ch'u'an's philosophy as a development of Ming-tao's, and it would seem natural to deal with the latter first. But Ming-tao's ideas are much less lucid and systematic than his brother's, and much less of his work survives. Modern explanations of his teaching differ greatly, although there is general agreement about Yi-ch'u'an's. It is therefore more convenient to deal first with Yi-ch'u'an, discussing not only ideas peculiar to him but those common to both, and afterwards to examine the thought of Ming-tao only where it has individual features.

We shall approach the philosophy of the Ch'êngs by explaining in succession each of their technical terms. When, for example, "principle" is used for *li*, it is of course merely a conventional equivalent, which one uses consistently in the hope that it will gradually shed some of its English implications and attract to itself more of the implications of *li*, always reserving the right to go back to the Chinese word whenever there is serious danger of misunderstanding. Of the equivalents used in this book, some convey much of the meaning and are seldom positively misleading (*hsing*, "nature"; *hsin*, "mind"); others are adequate in some contexts, but so treacherous in others that reversion to the Chinese word is often necessary (*li*, "principle"); others again have been chosen simply because they mean so little in English that they cannot very well be misleading (*ch'i*, "ether"). When introducing a new term one can give a rough definition, quote Chinese definitions (which often merely point to an aspect of the sense which may not be the most important to a European), and call attention to the root meaning, which being more concrete usually has a more exact English equivalent, and which generally exerts some control over later extensions of meaning. But one cannot hope to give a full account of what each word means before going on to explain how it is used; one understands the key terms to the extent that one understands the philosophy as a whole. The system has to be explained by allowing it to emerge gradually from the exposition of *li* and *ch'i*, *hsing* and *ké-tu*, which themselves gain in meaning as its outlines become clearer.

The reader should not be misled by the stress laid on the concrete meanings of words into supposing that they are less abstract than similar English words. Thus the basic meaning of the word *li* is traditionally supposed to be "to dress jade" or "veins in jade", and when Neo-Confucian teachers are looking for a concrete illustration

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

to make it plain to their disciples they sometimes refer to the grain of wood. What was useful to their disciples is also useful to us; but it would be a complete mistake to suppose that the philosophical term *li* ordinarily evokes a picture of veined jade or grained wood in the mind of a Chinese. There is a widespread illusion that Chinese writing is a form of picture-writing which prevents those who use it from thinking except in the most concrete terms. But Chinese characters represent, not images, nor even concepts, but words – for example, 若 *jo*, “if”, 故 *ku*, “therefore”, 必 *pi*, “necessarily”, 不 *pu*, “not”. The compound 影響 *ying-hsiang*, “influence”, is formed from two words meaning “shadow” and “echo”, and is written with their characters. But a Chinese using it does not see shadows and hear echoes in his mind, any more than an Englishman saying “influence” has a mental picture of a stream flowing into the people or events influenced. If one questions a Chinese who does not know how to write *ying-hsiang* (whom one would expect to think more rather than less concretely than a scholar), one finds that he does not know that the basic meaning is “shadows and echoes”, just as an Englishman ignorant of Latin does not know the etymology of “influence”.

In approaching a Chinese thinker, we inevitably force his ideas into our own frame of thought, assuming that the questions asked are those we should ask in the same situations. In course of time we become aware of places where the frame does not fit, and by successive modifications move nearer and nearer to his scheme of thought without ever quite reaching it. Although general comparisons between Chinese and European thought are outside the scope of this study, one cannot avoid attempting them in cases where a failure to observe differences in the underlying assumptions would involve seeing the former in terms of the latter. The uncovering of some of one's unconscious presuppositions, a clearer recognition that the same raw material of experience can be schematized in quite different ways, is perhaps the chief benefit that one can gain from a study of Yi-ch'u'an's philosophy which (unlike Ming-tao's) does not reflect any very rich or interesting view of life.

Study of the Neo-Confucian systems soon reveals apparent contradictions. On closer examination some of these turn out to be illusory, depending on preconceptions of our own which we read into the thought of the Chinese; others of course remain. Perfect consistency

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

is an ideal which the Neo-Confucians were no nearer to realizing than other philosophers; sometimes a thinker retains the traditional answer to one question without noticing that it clashes with his new answer to another question; sometimes the problem which a theory is devised to explain proves on inspection to confuse several problems, the differences between which open fissures in the seemingly firm structure of the theory. Thus the inconsistencies and evasions in Yi-ch'uan's account of the mind and the passions are clearly due to conflict between his need to divide the mind between Principle and Ether, and a traditional conception of the mind which treated it as one. When we can see why Yi-ch'uan failed to avoid contradiction, we can be fairly sure that the contradiction is real; otherwise it is safer to explore the possibility that there is some unnoticed difference between his point of view and ours.

Although it is impossible to translate from a Chinese philosopher without falsifying him to some extent, translation of course sets limits to the possibilities of unconscious misrepresentation, and one is pretty certain to stray beyond these limits in free exposition. Since none of the works of the Ch'êngs is suitable for consecutive translation, it has been thought advisable to include as many extracts as possible, in order to give the reader some idea of how much is said by the Ch'êng brothers explicitly and how much has been supplied (legitimately or otherwise) to make them intelligible in the context of European thought. For a European, the assumptions which the Ch'êngs share with other Neo-Confucians and even with Chinese philosophy in general need as much explanation as their original ideas. These common assumptions will be illustrated by quotations not only from the Ch'êngs but also from their predecessors, their disciples, Chu Hsi, minor Neo-Confucians of the late Sung and the succeeding Yüan dynasty, indeed from anyone who expresses them more clearly than do the Ch'êngs themselves. For the same reason, unattributed sayings of the Ch'êngs (always indicated by a question mark after the reference) will be used freely to illustrate ideas shared by both, and will imply a decision as to which is the speaker only when they concern an issue over which the brothers disagreed.

It must be admitted that long sequences of quotations, often repeating each other, or only partly relevant to the question at issue, or illustrating points which seem obvious, will sometimes make dull reading. Nevertheless, the most painstaking explanation of a Chinese

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

concept is worth less than the experience of meeting it repeatedly in different contexts. The more quotations there are, the better is the chance that the reader will begin to hear the voices of the Ch'éng brothers, and learn to distinguish them from my own.

1. *LI* (PRINCIPLE)

The word *li* is used both as a noun ("principle") and as a verb ("put in order"). The character is written with the "jade" radical, and it has long been assumed that its primary sense as a noun is "veins in jade", as a verb "dress jade". Although this etymology is open to question<sup>1</sup> it was taken for granted in the Sung dynasty, and the manner in which *li* was already compounded with words meaning "twig" (*tiao-li* 條理), "path" (*tao-li* 道理) and "veins of the body" (*mo-li* 脈理) shows the effect of this assumption on the use of the word. The Ch'êng brothers never find it necessary to define it, but a definition which agrees with their use of the word appears more than once in later writings of the Sung school. Thus it is said in an enquiry addressed to Hsü Hêng (1209–1281):

"If we exhaust the principles in the things of the world, it will be found that a thing must have a reason why it is as it is (*so-yi jan chih ku* 所以然之故) and a rule to which it should conform (*so tang jan chih tsé* 所當然之則), which is what is meant by 'principle'."<sup>2</sup>

Both of the phrases here used to explain *li* are used in conjunction with it by the Ch'êng brothers:<sup>3</sup>

"All things have principles, for example *that by which* (*so-yi*) fire is hot and *that by which* water is cold." (YS, 271/1)

"There is a single principle in outside things and in the self; as soon as 'that' is understood 'this' becomes clear. This is the way to unite external and internal. The scholar should understand everything, at one extreme the height of heaven and thickness of earth, at the other *that by which* a single thing is *as it is* (*so-yi jan*)."<sup>4</sup> (YS, 214/1f)

"To exhaust the principles of things is to study exhaustively *why they are as they are* (*so-yi jan*). The height of heaven and thickness of earth, the appearance and disappearance of the spirits, must have *reasons* (*so-yi jan*)."<sup>5</sup>

"Then this man stayed at his side and guarded him till dawn; how could he leave him and go home himself? This is *as it should be as a matter of moral principle* (*yi-li so tang jan* 義理所當然)."

(YS, 232/7f)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

"If he has not fulfilled all that depends on himself, an early death in poverty and degradation is *as it should be in principle* (*li so tang jan*)."<sup>1</sup> (YS, 335/4f)

"Not to be resentful against heaven and not to blame men is *as it should be in principle* (*tsai li tang ju tz'u* 在理當如此)."

(WS, 2/2B/4 Ming-tao)

A *li* is thus a natural or ethical principle, no distinction being made between the two. The following passages provide some representative examples:

"It is a constant principle that a tree flowers in spring and fades in autumn. As for perpetual flowering, there is no such principle."

(WS, 10/4B/9?)

"That the ruler is superior to the minister is a constant principle of the Empire."<sup>2</sup> (YS, 239/6)

"Consideration for others is a principle which exists of itself . . . 'Merely take what you feel in your heart and apply it to others'."

(YS, 10/5?)

"But there are cases of renewed prosperity after decline, and others of decline without recovery. Taking the complete cycle of history, the prosperity of the Five Emperors was not equalled by the Three Kings, nor that of the Three Kings by the former and later Han dynasties, nor that of the Han by its successors. Within the cycle there are any number of cases of prosperity and decline, such as Han prospering after the decline of the Three Dynasties, and Wei after the decline of Han. This is the principle of renewed prosperity after decline, like the rebirth of the moon after it is obscured, and the passing and return of the four seasons. If we consider the complete cycle of heaven and earth, taken as a whole, there is a principle of continuous diminution, just as the hundred years of a man's life are reduced by a day as soon as the baby has lived a day."<sup>3</sup> (YS, 221/6-9)

*Li* is frequently used in conjunction with the words *t'ui* 推 (push, extend, infer) and *lei* 類 (class, category). If a moral or natural principle applies to one thing we can also apply it to other things of the same class . . . 'extend the principle' (*t'ui-li*) or 'infer by analogy' (*t'ui-lei*). By extending the principles we learn that ultimately they are all the same, that a single principle runs through all things. In the following passages the words used as equivalents of *t'ui* and *lei* are all underlined:

"In investigating things to exhaust their principles, the idea is not

that one must exhaust completely everything in the world. If they are exhausted in only one matter, for the rest one can *infer by analogy*. Taking filial piety as an example, what is the reason why behaviour is considered filial? If you cannot exhaust the principles in one matter, do so in another, whether you deal with an easy or a difficult example first depending on the depth of your knowledge. Just so there are innumerable paths by which you can get to the capital, and it is enough to find one of them. The reason why they can be exhausted is simply that there is one principle in all the innumerable things, and even a single thing or activity, however small, has this principle."

(YS, 174/2-4)

"But all have this principle. If there were not this principle, the *inferences* would not be successful." (YS, 184/6)

"The innumerable things all have opposites; there is an alternation of Yin and Yang,\* good and bad. When the Yang grows the Yin diminishes, when good increases bad is reduced. This principle, how far it can be *extended*. It is all men need to know."

(YS, 136/1 Ming-tao)

"It is only after exhausting the principles that one can fulfil one's own nature; then, *inferring by analogy*, one can also enable others to fulfil their nature." (YS 126/11f, Chang Tsai)

Criticizing the doctrine of "equalizing things" of the Taoist Chuang-tzù (fourth century B.C.) Yi-ch'uan says:

"Was it the principles of things that Chuang-tzù wished to 'equalize'? Their principles have always been equal, and did not need Chuang-tzù to make them so. But if he meant the forms of things their forms have never been equal and cannot be made equal."

(YS, 315/5f)

In another discussion of this point, he concludes that to "equalize things"

"One can only *extend* the single principle that unites them."

(YS, 289/6)

Commenting on the hexagram *K'uei* (Opposition) in the *Book of Changes*, Yi-ch'uan writes:

"To *infer* the identity of the principles of things in order to understand the times and uses of 'Opposition' is the way in which the sage unites opposites. The identity of identical things is common knowledge; but it is because the sage can understand the basic identity of

\* p.32f

the principles of things that he can reduce everything in the world to identity and harmonize the innumerable *classes*. As examples the text gives heaven and earth, man and woman, and the innumerable things. Heaven is high, earth low; their positions are opposed. But when the descending Yang and ascending Yin unite, the work that they accomplish in transforming and nourishing things is identical. Man and woman are opposed in that they are differently constituted; but the will to seek the other is common to both. Things are mutually opposed in that they are produced in innumerable varieties. However, they all receive the harmony of heaven and earth and are endowed with the ether of the Yin and Yang, and in this they are of the same *class*. Although things are different their principles are basically the same." (YC, 3/25A/4-8)

Confucianism had always tended to account for the regularity of natural events in terms derived from the social order. All things are governed by the "decree of heaven", as men are governed by the decree of the Emperor; the seasons in their recurrence, the heavenly bodies in their cycles, men in their social relations, all follow the "way of heaven". The idea that there are principles from which one can infer had long been familiar (the phrase *t'uei-li* 'extend the principle' is already found in the *Huai-nan tzü*, a Taoist work of the second century B.C.<sup>5</sup>), but early Confucianism had not conceived the possibility of accounting for the regularity of nature in terms of principle alone. The great innovation of the Ch'eng brothers is to claim that "the innumerable principles amount to one principle"<sup>6</sup>, for which "heaven", the "decree", and the "Way" are merely different names, thus transforming a natural order conceived after the analogy of human society into a rational order. Such an achievement can only have been the result of long development, and a study of the gradual emergence of the idea of *li* during the preceding fifteen hundred years would no doubt reveal that the way had been prepared for them by earlier thinkers. But in any case it is clear that the form of this doctrine accepted by Confucians for the next eight hundred years is the invention of the Ch'eng brothers. The term *li* is not prominent in the writings of the most important of their immediate predecessors, Chou Tun-yi.\* Their friend Chang Tsai often speaks of the particular principles which account for such matters as the succession of Yin and Yang, knowledge, wordly success, the movements of the

\* p.164f

heavenly bodies;<sup>7</sup> but he does not speak of an all-embracing principle, and the basic term in relation to which he defines all the traditional Confucian terms is the "Supreme Void".

The relation of principle to heaven and the decree will be discussed in the next chapter. As for the Way (*tao*), Yi-ch'uan says:

"Q. What of the way of heaven?

"A. It is simply principle; principle is the way of heaven."

(YS, 316/9)

"Above and below, root and tip, inside and outside, are all one principle, which is the Way." (YS, 4/3?)

When the two words are contrasted, *li* refers to the principle of one thing or activity, *tao* to the common path followed by all things. Chu Hsi explains the difference as follows:

"Q. How do you distinguish between *tao* and *li*?

"A. *Tao* is path, while *li* are the lines.

"Q. Like the grain in wood?

"A. Yes.

"Q. In that case there seems to be no difference.

"A. The word *tao* is all-embracing; the *li* are so many veins inside the *tao*."

(Again) 'The word *tao* refers to the whole, the word *li* to the detail.'<sup>8</sup>

It will be observed that the images behind the two words are so closely related that Chu Hsi's questioner could see no difference between them. *Tao* is primarily way or path, *Li* is primarily veins in jade or grain in wood. In the last resort the principle of a thing is conceived after the analogy of lines or veins running through it, which one "follows" (*hsün li* 循理) as one follows a path. For this reason Bruce's translation of *li* as "law" may be misleading, as Joseph Needham points out.<sup>9</sup> When we describe what the Neo-Confucians call *li* as "moral laws" or "laws of nature", we suggest, however dimly, that they are imposed by a divine legislator on rebellious human nature or on a universe which would otherwise be a chaos. It is true that neither a Chinese speaking of *li* nor an Englishman speaking of "laws" is directly conscious of veins in jade or Acts of Parliament, but it is a commonplace that in dealing with abstractions one never completely escapes from the concrete metaphors hidden in the words. For the Sung philosophers a principle is a line which it is natural to follow, not a law which one is bound to obey; it is also

spontaneous, "thus of itself" (*tzü-jan*), and the idea of a legislator is completely foreign to them:

"The principles are like this spontaneously. 'The decree of heaven, how profound it is and unceasing'<sup>10</sup> means simply that the principles continue of themselves without ceasing, and are not made by man. If they could be made, even if they were improvised in hundreds and thousands of ways, there would still be a time when they would stop. It is because they are not made that they do not stop." (YS, 248/9f)

But there is another respect in which "principle" is no better than "law" as an equivalent of *li*. Both English words imply generality, and invite us to think in terms of the Western problem of universals and particulars. The great modern historian of Chinese philosophy, Feng Yu-lan, has indeed identified the *li* of things with universals. But the concepts "universal" and "particular" imply recognition of the problem of common names; and, as I have pointed out elsewhere,<sup>11</sup> the Sung philosophers do not discuss this problem, while certain thinkers of the Warring Kingdoms who do (Hsün-tzü and the later Mohists) take nominalism for granted. *Li* is in fact conceived in such a way that the problem does not arise; there are different *li* wherever there are differences, just as there is the same *li* wherever there are similarities. Principle seems to be conceived as a network of veins; however much they diverge from each other, the veins prove when we "extend" them to be one; on the other hand we can also go on indefinitely making finer and finer distinctions among them, finding as we proceed that not only classes but individuals and parts of individuals have *li* which distinguish them from each other. According to Chu Hsi:

"There is only one principle (*tao-li*), but its divisions are not the same . . . Thus there is only one for *this* board, but the grain runs one way here and another way there; one for a *single* house, but it has different sorts of room; one for plants, but they include both peach- and plum-trees; one for mankind, but there is Mr A and Mr B. Mr A cannot become Mr B; Mr B cannot become Mr A."<sup>12</sup>

Here there is no indication that the relation of mankind to Mr A is any different from that of plants to peach-trees, house to room; indeed all seem to be conceived as relations of whole and part.

What distinguishes the principles which are "above form" from the things and activities "below form" is not generality but permanence. Ch'en Ch'un, a disciple of Chu Hsi writes:

"The common path of innumerable ages is the Way. What does not change for innumerable ages is principle. The word 'Way' emphasizes that it is universal, the word 'principle' that it is real."<sup>13</sup>

The Ch'êng brothers also lay great stress on the idea that *li* is changeless, that behind the perpetual flux of the visible universe there are "constant principles" (*ch'ang li* 常理), "fixed principles" (*ting li* 定理), "real principles" (*shih li* 實理). They also assume, like Ch'êng Ch'un, that imperviousness to change is a proof of reality (*shih 實*, literally "solid"), although they do not, like the Buddhists, regard change as a proof of unreality (*hsü* 虛, literally "void"). For this reason Yi-ch'uan objected to the term "Supreme Void" (*t'ai-hsü* 太虛), which took the place of principle in Chang Tsai's system, and which seemed to imply unreality:

"When we spoke of the Supreme Void he said: 'There is no such thing'. Referring to the Void he continued: 'It is all principle; how can one call it void [unreal]? There is nothing in the world more solid [real] than principle.'" (YS, 71/1f)

As a matter of fact the criticism is unjust, for Chang Tsai consciously distinguished between *hsü* "void" and *hsü* "unreal":

"Gold and iron wear away in time; mountain peaks crumble in time; everything which has form soon decays; only the Supreme Void does not waver, and is therefore the most real (*shih*)."<sup>14</sup>

The Ch'êng brothers assume that principles exist in the same sense that material things exist, and that insight into them is a kind of perception ... to "see" (*chien* 見), "understand" (*ming* 明) or "illuminate" (*chu* 獻) the principles. Yi-ch'uan strongly denies that such entities as morality and the nature (both aspects of principle) cannot be perceived:

"Q. Is it through actions that morality becomes visible?

"A. It exists of itself within the nature.

"Q. It has no visible form.

"A. To say that it exists is to say that it can be seen; but men do not let themselves see it, although it is there quite plainly between heaven and earth. It is the same with the nature; why should there need to be a thing before one can point to the nature? The nature is present of itself. What you speak of seeing is the action; what I speak of seeing is the principle." (YS, 206/5f)

There is a deep difference between knowledge derived from the senses and insight into principles by the mind. Thus the sage does

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

not have a complete knowledge of facts, but he has a perfect insight into principles;<sup>15</sup> according to a favourite quotation from the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes* which originally referred to divination, his mind "is tranquil and unmoving; but when stimulated, it penetrates all the affairs of the world."<sup>16</sup>

"Knowledge derived from the senses is not the knowledge derived from the moral nature. When the body makes contact with things, knowledge of them is not from within. This is all that is meant nowadays by 'wide information and much ability'. The knowledge which comes from the moral nature does not depend on seeing and hearing."

(YS, 348/11)<sup>17</sup>

When asked about the Buddhist term "awakening", Yi-ch'u'an said:

"Why bring in the Buddhists? Mencius used the term when he spoke of 'the first to know awakening those who do not yet know, the first to awaken awakening those who have not yet awakened'.<sup>18</sup> 'Know' means knowing of an activity, 'awaken' means awakening to a principle." (YS, 217/7f)

There are, however, cases in which we know of an event without it being present to the senses . . . dreams, memory, divination, the transmission of ideas by music. In these cases the mind perceives the *li* of an event invisible (or, in memory, no longer visible) to the senses. The passages in which this question is discussed are interesting as a further demonstration that there are assumed to be individual as well as general *li*.

"What the mind 'penetrates when stimulated' is only the *li*. The events of the world as it knows them either are or are not, irrespective of past and present, before and after. For example, whatever is perceived in dreams is without form; there is only its *li*. If you say that dreams are concerned with such things as forms and voices, these are ether.<sup>19</sup> When a thing is born its ether assembles; when it dies, its ether scatters and returns to extinction. If there is a voice [that is, presumably, of a dead man seen in a dream] there must be a mouth; when there is contact there must be a body. When its matter has decayed, how can these remain? It follows that if it did not have their *li*, the dream could not be trusted." (YS, 58/12-14?)

"Within heaven and earth, what is simply is. For example, what a man has experienced, has seen and heard . . . one day after many years he may recall it, complete in his breast. Where has this particular *tao-li* been located?" (YS, 32/5? cf. 95/5?)

"Q. What is meant by 'Nothing is more visible than what is hidden, nothing is more apparent than what is minute'?

"A. Men recognize that something is visible and apparent only if they can perceive it with eyes and ears; what cannot be seen and heard they regard as hidden and minute. But they do not realize that the *li* is none the less clearly apparent. For example, once there was a man playing the lute; when he saw a mantis catching a cicada the audience felt that there was something murderous in the notes. Was not the thought of killing in his mind apparent, since others knew of it when they heard his playing?" (YS, 246/13f)

"There was a man who had been completely illiterate all his life, and yet one day when he fell ill he was able to recite a volume of Tu Fu's poems. There is nothing impossible in this [literally, 'Nevertheless there is this principle'] There are only two alternatives; the activities between heaven and earth either are or are not. When they are they are; when they are not they are not. As for Tu Fu's poems, these poems really exist in the world. Therefore, since there is such a *tao-li*, the man's mind, refined and concentrated by sickness, of itself reacted to it and penetrated it." But since the *li* are outside time there is a danger of chronological errors. Thus there was a woman who fell in a river and was assumed to be dead. Her death was confirmed by a servant who perceived telepathically where her ghost was and what it was doing; yet, later it turned out that she had been rescued. "What then are we to make of the servant's telepathy? In this case also the mind reacted and penetrated. But when we speak of the mind 'penetrating when stimulated' there is no distinction of death and life, past and present." (YS, 49/1-6? cf.54/1-4?)

The Ch'êngs generally refer to the principles of "affairs, matters, activities" (*shih* 事) rather than to the principles of "things" (*wu* 物). In this they continue the practice of using *li* and *shih* as counterparts characteristic of Buddhism.<sup>20</sup> Chu Hsi's comment on the key passage in the *Great Learning* concerning the "investigation of things" (*kê-wu*)\* claims that here *wu* is to be taken as meaning "activities", and in this he is only following Yi-ch'u'an:

"*Wu* means 'activities'. If you completely exhaust the principles in activities, there will be nothing that you do not understand."

(YS, 159/11)

There are, however, (apart from many general references to the

\* pp.74-81

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

"principles of things"), a few passages in which it is stated that each thing has its own principle:

"In general, there is one principle for each thing." (YS, 209/7f)

"All things have principles, for example that by which fire is hot and that by which water is cold. As for the relations between ruler and minister, father and son, all are principles." (YS, 271/1f)

In support of this view a passage from Mencius is sometimes quoted:

"The Ode says: 'Ever since heaven produced the people, where there are things there have been rules. The people, holding to the norm, love this excellent virtue.' So if there is a thing there must be a rule; and because the people hold to the norm, they love this excellent virtue."<sup>21</sup>

Ming-tao quotes this in full and comments:

"The innumerable things all have principles; to follow them is easy, to go against them is difficult. If each accords with its principle(s), what need is there to exert one's own strength?" (YS, 135/11f, Ming-tao)

Yi-ch'uán also alludes to it:

"The things of the world can all be explained by principles; 'if there is a thing there must be a rule'; one thing necessarily has one principle." (YS, 214/5)

"'If there is a thing there must be a rule'. The father rests in compassion, the son in filial piety, the ruler in benevolence, the minister in reverence. Each thing and every activity has its proper place; if it gets it there is peace, if not disorder. The reason why the sage can bring the Empire good government is not that he can make rules for it, but that he makes each rest in its proper place." (YC, 4/20B/7-9, on the hexagram *Kēn* "rest" in the *Book of Changes*).

The manner in which the principle of a thing is conceived is clearer in the later Neo-Confucians. Thus Chu Hsi says:

"This armchair is an object [literally 'instrument'], that it can be sat in is its principle; the human body is an object, that it speaks and moves is its principle."<sup>22</sup>

His disciple Ch'én Ch'un says:

"If we look at the matter in relation to activities and things, each of itself has a principle to which it should conform (*tang-jan chih li*). For example, 'the way he placed his feet was grave, and his hands, sedate'<sup>23</sup> The foot is a thing, gravity is its principle; the hand is a thing,

sedateness is its principle. Again, 'when looking, his object is to see clearly; when listening, to hear clearly'.<sup>24</sup> Clear sight and hearing are the principles of looking and listening. Again, 'sit like a representative of the dead, stand as if purifying yourself for sacrifice.'<sup>25</sup> To be like a representative of the dead, and as if purifying oneself for sacrifice, are the principles of sitting and standing. Inferring by analogy, everything, great or small, high or low, has an appropriate principle to which it should conform."<sup>26</sup>

It is natural for a European to conceive the *li* of a thing after the analogy of the Platonic ideas and universals of our own philosophy. But it will be noticed that in most of these quotations the *li* accounts not for the properties of a thing but for the task it must perform to occupy its place in the natural order. Each thing has a principle to follow; fathers should be compassionate and sons filial, fire should be hot and water cold. However, it will be seen when the concepts of "substance" and "function" are discussed\* that the Neo-Confucians take no interest in the properties of a thing, only in its function; if their attention had been called to the properties they might well have argued that all depend on the function (for example, that all the characteristics of the eye serve the purpose of seeing). There is no doubt that they assume that to know the principle of a thing is to know all about it. If it is the *li* of my father that I see in a dream, I am surely aware of more than the principle of compassion; and the sick man who perceived the *li* of Tu Fu's poems was able to recite them. The assumption that what a thing is depends on its function is easily understood when it is remembered that the Sung philosophers are always thinking primarily of moral principles, and that the "things" in which they are seen are in the first place such entities as fathers and sons, rulers and ministers. "Father" and "son" are normative as well as descriptive terms; one is truly a father only if one is compassionate, truly a son only if one is filial. One of the Ch'êngs says:

"Outside the Way there are no things and outside things there is no Way, so that within heaven and earth there is no direction to go which is not the Way. In the relation of father and son, [to be] a father or son depends on [literally "is in"] affection; in the relation of ruler and minister, [to be] a ruler or minister depends on majesty. As for being husband and wife, senior and junior, friend and friend, there is nothing one does which is not the Way." (YS, 80/5f?)

\* p.39f

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

In the "Explanation of the Doctrine of the Mean" (ascribed to Ming-tao but probably the work of the disciple Lü Ta-lin) the passage "Integrity (*ch'êng*)<sup>\*</sup> is the end and beginning of things; without integrity there are no things"<sup>27</sup> is taken to mean that without principles there are no things. This is justified from two points of view. If there is no principle by which a thing is produced and destroyed it cannot exist even if you think you have seen it. (The reference is no doubt to seeing ghosts.)<sup>28</sup>

"There is a thing only if there really is such a principle. Having [a principle] through which it comes, by which it is brought about, is the beginning of a thing; having [a principle] through which it perishes, by which it is destroyed, is the end of a thing. If there are neither of these principles, even when the image of a thing makes contact with the senses, the ear and eye cannot be trusted, and one has the right to deny that it is the thing."

Again, a thing which does not function according to the principle of what it is supposed to be must be something else.

"Integrity is nothing but reality. Because there really is the principle [outside us] there really is the thing, and therefore the function. Because there really is the principle [within us] there really is the idea [literally 'mind'], and therefore the action. These are both examples of 'by fathoming the beginning you understand the end'.<sup>29</sup> If a sieve cannot be used to sift it is not a sieve; if a ladle cannot be used to bale out wine and broth it is not a ladle." (CS, 8/6B/11-13,

7A/4-6)

Another term which sometimes reminds one of the Platonic idea is the *hsiang* 象, "image", prominent in the appendices of the *Book of Changes*. It is assumed that before things condense and take concrete form (*hsing* 形) they are latent in the rarefied ether as the images we perceive in reverie or dream. In the finer ether of heaven there are images which do not assume form . . . the sun, moon, and stars, which lack the solidity and firm outlines of things on earth. The images are, not so much represented by, as embodied in the diagrams of the *Book of Changes*; the name "image" is indeed often given to the diagrams themselves. The images are often mentioned by Chang Tsai,<sup>30</sup> seldom by the Ch'êngs. But Yi-ch'uan introduces them in a very interesting way when discussing the relation between the hexagram *Ting* (tripod) and the invention of the tripod:

\* p.67f

"The construction of the vessel is derived from the image. The image is preserved in the diagram but the diagram is not necessarily earlier than the vessel. The sages were able to construct the vessel because they knew the image without having to see the diagram. But since ordinary people could not know the image, they prepared the diagram in order to show it to them. Whether the diagram is earlier or later than the vessel does not affect its meaning. It may be objected that there can be no natural (*tzü-jan*) image since the tripod was made by man. The answer is that certainly it is man-made, but the fact that things can be made edible by cooking, and that its use depends on a certain form and construction, is not man-made but natural. It is the same with the diagram *Ching* [well]. Although the vessel existed before the diagram, it is derived from the image represented by the diagram, while the diagram uses the vessel to give it its meaning."

(YC, 4/12B/4-7)

Although this reminds one of Western discussions of universals, there is a decisive difference; the Neo-Confucians do not ask whether images belong to individual things or to their classes.

The images are a rather incongruous survival in Yi-ch'uan's philosophy from the older monist way of thought continued by Chang Tsai, according to which things are latent as images in the primal source, and emerge out of it to assume concrete form. There is a passage in the earliest collection of Yi-ch'uan's sayings, recorded in 1080,<sup>31</sup> in which he seems not yet to have thrown off the older way of thinking, although he jumps abruptly from the metaphor of a root out of which things grow to that of a rut or track along which we move, the latter being the Principle which dominates his mature thought:

"When it is empty and without the least stirring, the innumerable images are already complete, as thick as a forest. Its state before it responds does not precede its state after it responds. It is like a tree a hundred feet high; from the root to the branches and leaves, all are a continuous whole. It must not be said that what is up above [Principle], being without form or sign, depends on human improvisation to pull it into a track. Wherever there is a track(?)<sup>32</sup>, there is yet only the one track." (YS, 169/13f, paraphrased TY, 2/21B/11f)

According to this obscure passage, things emerge from a cosmic ground which also underlies our own minds. The images of things in our own minds are also latent in the cosmic ground, out of which they emerge to become concrete things. Like the activity of the mind,

the growth of things out of the primal root is a response to stimulation\* which can, however, come only from within itself.<sup>33</sup> There was never a time when things were not emerging from it, so that although a quiescent state before it responds is logically prior to response, there is no such state preceding it in time.

This saying is exceptional even in the collection of 1080, where Yi-ch'uuan already speaks of the generation of ether from a "primary ether" (*ch'en-yüan chih ch'i*)†<sup>34</sup> clearly differentiated from Principle. The images, less substantial than concrete things but not different in kind, give place in his thinking to the principles of things. The passage just quoted may be compared with the following:

"When it [the mind] is 'tranquil and unmoving', the innumerable things are already present complete, as thick as a forest." (YS, 171/2 also recorded in 1080)

"It is tranquil and unmoving, but when stimulated it penetrates.<sup>15</sup> Heaven's principle is all complete, there has never been any deficiency." (YS, 45/3f? recorded by Lü Ta-lin, who became a disciple in 1079 and died in 1092-3)

Since the images are prominent in the appendices of the *Book of Changes*, Yi-ch'uuan cannot ignore them in his commentary on that classic (the preface to which was written in 1099); but they have no real place in his system, and in the few passages in which he seems to be relating them to principle he is evidently thinking of the diagrams themselves rather than the images embodied in them.<sup>35</sup>

\* pp.38f, 63f      † p.42

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The history of the word *li* has been investigated by T'ang Chün-yi and also by Demiéville, who has given an illuminating and all too short summary of his results in the *Annuaire du Collège de France* for 1947. He concludes that the original meaning of *li* is not "dressing jade" (as is said in the *Shuo-wén*), but the division of land into plots, as in the *Book of Odes*. Up to the end of the Han *li* was used as "un principe d'ordre, de bonne répartition des choses". Buddhism turned *li* into an "absolu métaphysique immanent en chacun de nous", in opposition to *shih* 事, the relative and phenomenal. (There are no Sanskrit terms reproduced by *li* and *shih* in Buddhist translations, and the new sense of *li*, as well as its opposition to *shih*, were already emerging in the Taoism of the third century A.D.) Neo-Confucianism returned to the old sense of "un principe d'ordre naturel", but without fully freeing itself from the Buddhist conception of *li* as an Absolute immanent in the self and in all things.

<sup>2</sup> *Lu-chai yi-shu* 1/5B/6-10 (reproduced in SYHA 22/128/6). A similar definition is given by Wu Ch'eng (1249-1333), *Hsing-li ching-yi* 9/29B/6-10.

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

<sup>1</sup> For a much earlier example, see Wang Pi (226–249):

"If one is acquainted with a thing's movements, the principles by which it is as it is (*so-yi jan chih li*) can all be seen." (*Chou Yi Wang Han chu* 1/4A/5)

<sup>2</sup> TY, 2/35B/2 (based on YS, 174/9). For other examples of *so-yi* (*jan*) in connexion with *li*, see YS, 169/9 (cf. 164/10), 174/2, CS, 1/1B/12.

<sup>3</sup> *Huai-nan tz'u* 15/12A/10. *T'ui-lei* is used by Hsün-tz'u (*Hsün-tz'u chi-chieh* 4/25/4). For other examples of *t'ui* used in connexion with *li* and *lei* by the Ch'eng brothers, see YS, 2/10, 35/7f, 39/14, 137/10n, 227/6, 236/3, 309/8, YCWC, 5/12B/2–5.

<sup>4</sup> YS, 216/11.

<sup>5</sup> CTCS, 27/4, 31/6, 35/3, 40/5, 44/2, 68/10, etc.

<sup>6</sup> YL, 6/IA/10–12.

<sup>7</sup> Needham 557–62.

<sup>8</sup> *Ode* No.267 (L, 570/1–571/1).

<sup>9</sup> "Kung-sun Lung's Essay on Meanings and Things", *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 2/2 (1955) 283–5.

<sup>10</sup> YL, 6/3B/8, 4A/3.

<sup>11</sup> *Pei-ch'i tz'u yi* 2/5B.

<sup>12</sup> CTCS, 268/5.

<sup>13</sup> YS, 248/13f.

<sup>14</sup> Sung 295/4f.

<sup>15</sup> This saying is also found in the works of Chang Tsai (CTCS, 45/13f).

<sup>16</sup> Mencius L, 363/6.

<sup>17</sup> Paraphrased in TY, 2/32B/9 as "What we meet in dreams is without forms and voices, but what the mind penetrates when stimulated has the *li* of forms and voices."

<sup>18</sup> Cf. YS, 216/10.

<sup>19</sup> Mencius L, 403/5–9, quoting *Ode* No.260, L, 541/1–4.

<sup>20</sup> YL, 77/5B/10–12.

<sup>21</sup> *Li chi*, Couvreur I, 721/1f.

<sup>22</sup> *Analects*, L, 314/4.

<sup>23</sup> *Li-chi*, Couvreur I, 3/5–7.

<sup>24</sup> *Pei-ch'i tz'u yi* 2/3A.

<sup>25</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 418/5–7.

<sup>26</sup> The Ch'êngs rejected stories of seeing ghosts as impossible in principle (YS, 54/5–13f, 211/2–7, 314/7–315/1).

<sup>27</sup> *Great Appendix*, Sung, 330/1, cf. 278/3

<sup>28</sup> CTCS, 36/10, 38/6, 71/10, 80/1, 223/5–10, 224/3, 231/14, 253/14–254/2, 261/13.

<sup>29</sup> YS, c.15. (See Chu Hsi's note on it in the table of contents.)

<sup>30</sup> Chu Hsi found this sentence unintelligible and suspected that it was corrupt (YL, 95/22B/4).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. YS, 45/3f?, 171/2 (both quoted on p.63 below), 177/6–8 (quoted p.123 below).

<sup>32</sup> YS, 165/1, 183/4–7.

<sup>33</sup> YC, Preface 3A/9, YCWC, 5/16A/4–7 (latter quoted p.159 below).

## 2. MING (DECREE)

Before the Sung the central place in the Confucian world-picture had been occupied by *t'ien* 天, "heaven", which was conceived as a very vaguely personal power controlling nature as the Emperor, the "Son of Heaven", controls men. The course which things follow or should follow—the recurrence of the seasons, the cycles of the heavenly bodies, the customs of men—is the "way of heaven". Everything which man cannot alter—his nature, his destiny—is due to the "decree of heaven" (*t'ien-ming* 天命). The great innovation of the Ch'êngs, as we have seen, is the elevation of principle to the place formerly occupied by heaven; and this involves treating "heaven" and its "decree", as well as the "Way", as merely names for different aspects of principle.

One of the main functions of the terms "heaven" and the "decree" had been to indicate what is objectively given, independent of human action and desire. In the words of Mencius:

"The doer of what no one has done is heaven. That which happens when no one has caused it is decreed."<sup>1</sup>

For Yi-ch'uuan this is one of the aspects of principle. The principles we must follow are "thus of themselves" (*tzû-jan*) and cannot be improvised to suit our needs; it is to emphasize this side of it that the one principle is called "heaven" and the subsidiary principles which derive from it are called "decrees".<sup>2</sup>

"What is called heaven is self-dependent (*tzû-jan*) principle."  
(YS, 343/2f)

"The self-dependence of the nature [the nature is also identified with principle]\* is called heaven." (YS, 349/7)

To make the same point principle is often qualified as "heaven's principle" (*t'ien-li*). Paraphrasing the quotation from Mencius just given, Yi-ch'uuan says:

"If it is done without anyone doing it, and happens without anyone causing it, it is [due to] heaven's principle." (YS, 237/10)

Thus to say that heaven punishes the wicked means only that there

\* p.48

is a principle, of course not always followed in practice, that the wicked are to suffer. If a man is executed by a ruler who is merely following principle without any intrusion of selfish motive, it is heaven and not the ruler who punishes him. If he is killed by lightning it is because natural processes follow the same principle, the "evil ether" of the transgressor exciting the "evil ether of heaven and earth". Heaven is entirely impersonal; the ancient term *ti* 帝 "God" is treated as merely another name for principle emphasizing that it controls all things.<sup>3</sup>

"Q. What of the rewarding of the good and punishment of the wicked?

"A. This is a self-dependent principle . . . for good there is reward, for wickedness punishment.

"Q. What about the Way of Heaven?

"A. It is simply principle; principle is the way of heaven. Thus to say that 'High heaven shook with anger'<sup>4</sup> by no means implies that there is a man up above who shakes with anger; it is simply that the principle is like this [that is, that the crime deserves anger].

"Q. What of the way good and evil are recompensed nowadays?

"A. It is a matter of luck and ill-luck." (YS, 316/9f)

"Q. When there is evil in a man, and he is shocked to death by thunder, is it not because, having evil in his mind, he dies of fright when he hears the thunder?

"A. No. It is the shock of the thunder that kills him.

"Q. In that case must there not be someone who causes it?

"A. No. Since the man has done evil, there is evil ether which clashes with the evil ether of heaven and earth, so that he dies of the shock." (YS, 260/11f)

"For the innumerable things there is nothing but the one heaven's principle; what has self to do with it? Thus when it is said that 'Heaven punishes the guilty, by the five penalties and their applications; heaven decrees for the virtuous the five styles of dress and their ornaments',<sup>5</sup> this means only that independently (*tzü-jan*) by heaven's principle there should be such recompense. What has man to do with it? If he intrudes, that is to have selfish motives. There is good and there is evil; if there is good, then it is a matter of principle that one should rejoice in it, and the five styles of dress have a sequence of their own to display it. If there is evil, it is a matter of principle that one should be angry; the affair decides itself by principle, and therefore there are the 'five penalties and their applications'." (YS, 30/14-31/2?)

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

The relation between human action and destiny is a favourite problem of Confucian philosophy. A typical view is that of Mencius; "everything is decreed", but to be punished for a crime is not one's "true decree".<sup>6</sup> Heaven has decreed what will happen if I live properly, my true decree; but it has also decreed what will happen if I do not. Since Yi-ch'uuan believes that nothing can occur unless there is a *li* that it will occur, he is bound to accept the view that "everything is decreed" and to reject Chang Tsai's view that there are chance happenings.<sup>7</sup>

"Q. What is the difference between the decree and chance?

"A. Whether men chance on something or not is just what is decreed.

"Q. At the battle of Ch'ang-P'ing [in which the Chao army was wiped out by Po Ch'i] four hundred thousand men died. How can the same death have been decreed for all of them?

"A. This was none the less decreed. They chanced on Po Ch'i because it was decreed that it should happen like this. This is the less difficult to understand since the Chao soldiers were all men of one country; it is common enough for men from all over the 'five lakes and four seas' to die together.

"Q. There are criminals who become kings and ministers who starve to death, men who fall from high rank and men who rise from low rank; are all such things decreed?

"A. 'Everything is decreed.' It is because of what is called the decree that there are such inequalities of fortune; there is nothing strange about it." (YS, 225/6-9)

"Q. For each man there is of course an allotment of wealth or poverty, high rank or low, long life or short. If a gentleman has previously fulfilled all that depends on [literally 'is in'] himself, which of these he receives may be said to be decreed. If he has not, early death in poverty and degradation is what should happen in principle; long life in wealth and honour is luck, and cannot be described as decreed.

"A. Even if it cannot be described as decreed, whether he has wealth or poverty, high or low rank, long life or short, is none the less fixed in advance. Mencius says: 'In cases where we find merely by seeking and lose merely by neglecting, seeking is of use to finding; for we seek what is in ourselves. Where we can only seek according to the Way and find if it is so decreed, seeking is of no use to finding; for we

seek what is external.'<sup>8</sup> So the gentleman is content with the decree because he recognizes duty; the small man is content with duty because he recognizes the decree." (YS, 335/4-8)

In spite of this, it is felt to be morally dangerous for men to think of the consequences of their own evil actions as decreed:

"Q. 'To die in fetters is not the true decree.'<sup>9</sup> But is it not decreed all the same?

"A. The sages only teach men to accept their true [lot] obediently, without speaking of the decree.

"Q. Is not a death in fetters decreed?

"A. Mencius himself said that 'everything is decreed'; but the sage none the less does not say that it is decreed." (YS, 237/1f)

We are familiar in European philosophy and theology with the claim that a murder is predestined by God, or predetermined by an inexorable sequence of cause and effect, but that all the same the murderer shouldn't have done it. At first sight Yi-ch'uan's position seems to be the same. However, one is always uneasily conscious when reading Chinese discussions of the decree that, however close they come to touching the problem of free will, there are elusive differences between their presuppositions and ours as a result of which the problem does not arise for them. In Yi-ch'uan's case, the easiest way to identify these presuppositions is to consider how far the idea of *li* implies necessity. He believes that a principle is "thus of itself" and cannot be improvised by man; thus an action is in principle right or wrong whatever I may choose to think of it. He also holds that if there is a thing or activity there is necessarily a principle "by which it is as it is"; and his usual way of asserting impossibility is to say "There is not this principle":

"The things of the world can all be explained by principle; 'if there is a thing there must be a rule'; one thing necessarily has one principle." (YS, 214/5)

"The perfect integrity of a common man stimulating heaven and earth . . . *certainly it is possible* [literally 'certainly there is this principle'] But the opinion of Tsou Yen [of the Five Elements school, about 300 B.C.] goes too far. All that can be said is that there are cases of stimulating cold at the height of summer, but none of happenings *outside principle*. As for changing summer into winter and bringing down frost and snow, *it is impossible* [there is not this principle]."  
(YS, 178/14-179/1)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

"Whenever things disperse, their ether is exhausted; *they cannot* [there is not a principle that they] return to their original state."

(YS, 180/9)

"That in the remote past there were men with ox's heads and snake's bodies—*surely this is impossible?* [surely there is not this principle?]" (YS, 220/4)

But Yi-ch'u'an does not assert the opposite—that if there is the principle there must necessarily be the thing or activity; and "There is this principle" is his usual way of affirming not necessity but possibility.

"Shao Yung's being able to calculate by numbers the length of a thing's life and the date of its beginning and end—is this possible? [is there this principle?]" (YS, 218/7)

"By perfect integrity being able to walk on fire and water—is this possible? [is there this principle?]" (YS, 210/13)

"The sun and moon are of the same order. *How can the sun be* [how is there a principle that the sun is] higher than the moon?"

(YS, 261/8)

"There are cases of revival after death; so it is proper to wait three days before burial . . . When a man is buried before the three days are up, there is always the *possibility* [principle] of killing him."

(WS, 11/2B/7f)

It appears to common sense that for some events there is only one possible course (*e.g.* the succession of the seasons), while for others (in particular those depending on human choice) there are alternative courses. The tendency of European science, at any rate until quite recently, has been to eliminate the latter category, showing that the more one understands the causes the clearer it becomes that only one of the apparent alternatives is possible. But it is easy to see that a philosophy which treats principles after the analogy of veins (*li*) or paths (*tao*) will find no reason to question the common-sense view. There is a network of intersecting lines; things necessarily follow these lines. As long as there is only one line to follow there is no problem; in this passage, for example, there would be no point in asking whether *li* implies necessity or possibility:

"If we consider the complete cycle of heaven and earth, taken as a whole, there is a principle of continuous diminution, just as the hundred years of man's life are reduced by a day as soon as the baby has lived a day." (YS, 221/9)

But wherever there is a cross-roads, the path by which one has arrived does not determine which alternative one will choose:<sup>9</sup>

"Han Yü says that when Shu Hsiang's mother heard Yang Ssü-wo being born, she knew that he would certainly destroy his clan. There is nothing wonderful in this. He was endowed at birth with evil ether, so that there was a *li* that he would destroy his clan. This is why she knew it when she heard his voice. If he could have learned to conquer his ether and restore his nature, this misfortune need not have happened." (YS, 277/1f)

Thus there was a *li* (determining his endowment of ether) that Yang Ssü-wo would destroy his clan, and there were also the moral principles within his nature; but nothing compelled him to follow the former rather than the latter. The consequences of following the latter would presumably have been his "true decree"; but the destruction of his clan was also decreed, in that there was a *li* for it whether it happened or not.

Similarly, Yi-ch'uan says:

"It is the way of husband and wife that they should constantly anticipate far in advance the final consequences, and knowing without fail that there is a principle of ruin [that is, the possibility of ruin], take care to guard against it." (YC, 4/28A/6)

Referring to explanations of the history of dynasties in terms of the five elements and the Yin and Yang, Yi-ch'uan says:

"The T'ang dynasty had the virtue of the element earth, so there were few floods. The present dynasty has that of fire, so there are many conflagrations.<sup>10</sup> For there is this principle; the only qualification is that there must be principles (*tao-li*) in addition to it. The point about the hundred years in *Kuan Lang* is excellent.<sup>11</sup> In these matters it must be said that to deal with them in one way is auspicious, in another way ill-omened. The same is true of everything else. For even the decree of heaven can be usurped by man, for example the Taoist nourishing his body to snatch back years already lost, and the sage by his possession of the Way prolonging the decree of a declining dynasty—simply because there are these principles."

(YS, 288/8-10, cf. 178/5-7, 317/12-14)

There is a principle that man does not live longer than a hundred years; that is the term of life decreed for him. But there are other principles known to the Taoist by following which life can be prolonged. A man can take either course, but he cannot take a course

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

which is "outside principle", which is not decreed—that is, he cannot prolong his life unless he practices the Taoist arts.

For Yi-ch'uan *li* is at once natural and ethical, and it is apparently assumed that a plant by flowering in spring and fading in autumn is following principle in the same way as a father by being compassionate and a son by being filial. The difficulties which result from this assumption are especially obvious in his discussions of the decree. To be good is to follow principle; yet we are still doing so when we act wrongly. Why was Yang Ssü-wo wrong in acting according to the *li* that he would destroy his clan? One reason why Yi-ch'uan is unconscious of any difference between descriptive and normative principles is no doubt that for him what is normative is not so much the assertion of a principle as the definition of a thing (an attitude encouraged by the Confucian emphasis on the "correct use of names"—for example, one who rules by force and not by the decree of heaven is a "tyrant", not a "king"). Chinese writers seldom tell us that a father *should* be compassionate to his son; a father *is* compassionate, and a man who is not is not a father. Further, terms such as *li* ("vein") and *tao* ("way") are themselves normative as well as descriptive, having a concealed implication of direction. A road can go the wrong way, but it is not "the road". There is a "way of the small man", but it is not "the Way". There was a *li* that Yang Ssü-wo would destroy his clan, but it was not *Li*. Concealed in the definition of a noun, the distinction between descriptive and normative does not force itself on the attention; to become aware of it as a problem the Ch'êngs would have had to habituate themselves to making more consistent use of normative verbs such as *tang* 當 ("should"), to saying not:

"Fathers are compassionate. Therefore X is not a father",  
but

"X is a father. Therefore X ought to be compassionate."

In certain late members of the Sung school we do in fact find some attention being paid to the difference between *jan* 然 ("is thus") and *tang jan* 當然 ("should be thus") and between the decree and morality. Thus Hsü Hêng says:

"That by which something is as it is (*so-yi jan*) and that to which it should conform (*so tang jan*) is the explanation of the word *li*. That by which it is as it is, is the source—the decree; that to which it should conform is the outflow—morality. Every single activity and thing

must have a (principle) by which it is as it is, and to which it should conform."

"In the sphere of human affairs there are two divisions; there are activities which derive from oneself, and others which do not. The former have morality in them, the latter have the decree in them. They are to be referred only to morality and the decree."<sup>11</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Mencius*, L, 359/9f

<sup>2</sup> Unlike Chu Hsi, who divides the decree between principle and ether, Yi-ch'uan identifies it exclusively with principle. See YS, 99/4f, 225/11f, 14, 299/10, YC, 3/51B/11.

<sup>3</sup> YS, 314/6. Also 31/10? 145/7, Ming-tao.

<sup>4</sup> *Book of History*, L, 285/3f.

<sup>5</sup> *Book of History*, L, 74/1-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Mencius*, L, 449/7-450/4.

<sup>7</sup> CTCS, 80/16.

<sup>8</sup> *Mencius*, L, 450/5-9.

<sup>9</sup> The image of a cross-roads is not uncommon, as in this passage:

"That Confucians often end up by going over to heretical doctrines is not because they want to, but because to do so is inherent in their situation. For their wisdom and strength being exhausted, they want to rest; and at the same time they know that they are not yet secure, so that they cannot rest. So when they see someone who has a principle (*tao-li*), their situation compels them to follow it. In the same way, when a man is walking on a wide road, level and unobstructed, he will not take a side-path. It is only because there is an obstacle which holds him up, a mountain or river ahead, that when he sees a side-path going the wrong way he is delighted to follow it" (YS, 172/13-173/1).

<sup>10</sup> Accepting the variant in line 8. 𠀤 in the text of the Basic Sinological Series is a misprint for 𠀥.

<sup>11</sup> *Chung-shuo* 10 (*Kuan Lang p'ien*) 12A-15A. Kuan Lang is said to have divined the history of the next hundred years in A.D. 503, but to have insisted that at each crisis whether the predicted outcome would be realized depended on the worth of the ruler.

"Good government and disorder have the possibility of change (a principle that they can change)" (13B/7).

"When the ceremonies of Chou were practised, why should not its estimated term be prolonged to eight hundred years? When the laws of Ch'in were established, how could the imperial house outlast two generations?" (14B/8f, quoted in YS, 317/14).

<sup>12</sup> *Lu-chai yi-shu* 1/7A/6-10, 7A/2f (also in SYHA, 22/128/6-8, 12).

3. *CH'I* (ETHER)

*Ch'i* 氣, a common and elusive word in ordinary Chinese speech as well as in philosophy, covers a number of concepts for which we have different names in English or none at all. Unlike the abstract *li* (represented as veins or grain only by metaphor), *ch'i* is quite concrete; it really is, among other things, the breath in our throats. It is the source of life, dispersing into the air at death; we breathe it in and out, and feel it rising and ebbing in our bodies as physical energy, swelling when we are angry, failing in a limb which grows numb; we smell it as odours, feel it as heat or cold, sense it as the air or atmosphere of a person or place, as the vitality in a poem, or as the breath of spring which quickens and the breath of autumn which withers; we even see it condensing as vapour or mist. The standard equivalent is "ether", proposed by Bruce; this may be accepted, less because it is appropriate than because it can be used consistently for *ch'i* alone, and in any case means so little that it cannot be positively misleading.

By the time of the Sung dynasty it had come to be accepted that solid things, in which the ether breathes and gives life and movement, themselves condense from and dissolve into the ether, so that matter (*chih* 壓) is merely ether in a very dense and inert state. In the words of Chu Hsi, "the pure ether is ether, the impure ether is matter". The manner in which the earth condensed out of the ether around it (that is, the air) is described by Chu Hsi:

"At the beginning of heaven and earth, there was only the Yin and Yang ether.\* This single ether revolved, [the Yin and Yang] rubbing together to and fro, until the friction was so intense that it squeezed out quantities of sediment. There was no place inside for the sediment to escape, so it congealed and became the earth in the centre. The purest of the ether became heaven, the sun and moon, and the stars, which constantly wheel round outside. The earth is unmoving in the centre; it is not underneath."

"Heaven revolves unceasingly, turning day and night; that is why the earth is held in the middle. Supposing heaven were to stop for a

\* p.32f

moment, earth would be bound to fall. It is only because of the speed of heaven's revolutions that it can congeal so much sediment in the middle. The earth is the sediment of the ether. That is why it is said that the light and pure become heaven, the heavy and impure become earth."<sup>1</sup>

This bears an odd resemblance to modern cosmogonies; and the resemblance is not quite accidental, as it is with many superficially modern features in Chinese thought. Chu Hsi noticed the presence of fossil shellfish in mountains, as well as the similarity of mountains to waves, which suggested to him that they were once liquid.<sup>2</sup> In the West, the doctrine that God created the world in six days hindered understanding of such points; but the belief that matter is condensed ether, although itself metaphysical rather than scientific, provided a background against which Chu Hsi could see their significance.

The ether (as we see from breathing) alternately moves and returns to stillness. Moving, opening out, expanding, it is called Yang; returning to stillness, closing, contracting, it is called Yin. When a thing is coming into existence, its ether first moves outward in the Yang phase, then is stilled by the withdrawing Yin and settles into a lasting shape. The "two ethers" (as they are already called in the *Book of Changes*<sup>3</sup>) are responsible for all natural opposites; thus light, hardness, heat, the male, are Yang, while darkness, softness, cold, the female, are Yin. The system sometimes leads to paradoxical results: for example, when good and evil are included good has to be classed as Yang and evil as Yin, although as a rule goodness is said to reside in a proper balance between the two. Originally the two terms seem to have referred primarily to light and darkness; but as the system developed this pair fell into the background and its guiding principle became the activity and passivity of the ether, revealed most directly in movement and stillness. According to Ming-tao,

"Movement and stillness are the basis of the Yang and Yin."

(MTWC, 4/8B/11)

and Chou Tun-yi's *Explanation of the Chart*, accepted as the chief authority by Chu Hsi and his successors, opens with the words

"It is the ultimate of nothing which is the Supreme Ultimate. The Supreme Ultimate moving produces the Yang, and at the ultimate of movement becomes still. Becoming still, it produces the Yin; and at the ultimate of stillness again moves. Movement and stillness alternate, each the root of the other."<sup>4</sup>

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

It had been the practice for a thousand years to arrange things and activities in pairs, each with one Yin and one Yang member, or in groups of five (the colours, sounds, smells, tastes) corresponding with the five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal and water), or of four (the seasons, the cardinal points) corresponding with the elements omitting earth. But although the Neo-Confucians accepted the correspondences of the five elements, they gave much less attention to them than to the Yin and Yang, perhaps finding them less useful in practice. The concepts of active Yang and passive Yin are fruitful ones, and Arnold Toynbee, for example, has used them in his *Study of History*; the distinctions they reflect are in many cases objective, in that even a European, when presented with a new pair (for example, above and below, speech and silence, ruler and minister), can often guess that the former is Yang and the latter Yin. But the correspondences of the five elements with the seasons, the cardinal points and the colours are quite arbitrary, starting with members which have real connexions and filling in the rest for the sake of symmetry; if we understand why fire goes with summer, south and red, why should metal go with autumn, west and white?

The ether occupies the same place in Neo-Confucianism as matter in Western philosophy, and it is not surprising that Le Gall, one of the first European scholars to study Neo-Confucianism, translated it by *matière*. But in many respects it is very unlike what we understand by matter, and an analysis of the differences is perhaps the best way to approach it. For us matter is what has mass, and is most obviously itself in solid things such as metal; to say, for example, that air is matter, makes sense to us only because we suppose that it consists of atoms similar to those composing metal but more widely distributed in space. But ether is more easily recognized as air, pure, active, and freely moving, than as metal, in which it is impure, dense, obstructed. Thus one of the Ch'êngs, explaining that, although it is usual to speak of heaven and earth as counterparts, earth is surrounded by sky above and below, says:

"Below the earth there must be heaven. What we call earth is nothing but a thing inside heaven. It has assembled like a mist, and because over a long period it has not dispersed, it is considered the counterpart of heaven. Earthquakes are only movements of the ether."

(YS, 57/5f?)

Le Gall, whose mistakes, since he was genuinely trying to define

clearly what the Neo-Confucians mean, are stimulating rather than confusing, was tricked by his identification of *ch'i* and matter into supposing that the assembly and dispersal of ether implies that it is composed of atoms. A passage in Chang Tsai's *Correction of Delusions*, 氣之聚散於太虛猶冰凝釋於水,

"The assembly and dispersal of the ether in the Supreme Void is like ice congealing and melting in water,"<sup>5</sup> is actually rendered

"La condensation et les dispersions des atomes dans la T'ai-hiu peuvent se comparer à la congélation et à la fonte de la glace dans l'eau,"<sup>6</sup>

in spite of the fact that the comparison with water shows clearly that the ether is a continuum and not an aggregation of atoms.

What for the Sung school distinguishes the material from the immaterial is closer to Descartes' criterion, extension in space, than to the more modern criterion, mass. It is the possession of form (*hsing 形*). According to the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes*

"What is above form is called the Way; what is below form is called an instrument [concrete thing]."<sup>7\*</sup>

One of the Ch'êngs says:

"All that has form is ether; only the Way is without form."

(YS, 90/8?)

The distinction is made more precisely by Hu Hung, a disciple of the Ch'êng disciples Hou Chung-liang and Yang Shih:

"Things are confined by number and come to an end; the Way pervades all transformations and has no limit."<sup>8</sup>

Things (*wu 物*) with visible outlines come into existence as the ether assembles and perish as it disperses; but in any of its states ether has form in that it has limits in space and time:

"Even smells and sounds have form; they come and go in the wind and can be interrupted or continued." (YS, 290/9, quoting Chang Tsai)

The chief source of difficulty for the understanding of *ch'i* is that the Sung philosophy does not draw our habitual distinctions between matter and force, animate and inanimate, mind and body. According to the view that comes most naturally to us, matter is "inert" and moves when pushed from outside. When approaching such Chinese terms as ether, Yin and Yang, the Five Elements, we tend to presuppose that they refer either to substances or to forces. On this point

\* p.122

Le Gall again made an illuminating mistake, which is criticized by Bruce;<sup>9</sup> he assumed that since the *ch'i* is matter and matter is inert, it must be moved by the *li*. "Li est le principe d'activité, de mouvement, d'ordre dans la nature; ce que nos évolutionnistes contemporains M. Spencer, Darwin, Haeckel, appellent *une force de développement inhérente à la matière*, qui sans elle resterait inerte."<sup>10</sup> But the ether is always assumed to be self-moving, although of course its movement, like all its other characteristics, is accounted for by the principles "by which it is as it is". The idea that stillness is merely the absence of movement, that a thing comes to rest when forces cease to act on it, is quite foreign to Chinese conceptions, according to which stillness is due to the pull of the Yin which returns as the Yang ceases. According to Chang Tsai:

"The movement of all things that revolve [such as planets] must have *chi* [氣 inward springs of movement, incipient movements not yet visible outside]. By having *chi*, I mean that their movement is not from outside."<sup>11</sup>

In practice we ourselves use such words as "breath", "wind", "fire" without distinguishing between substance and force. For the Sung school these are typical examples of ether in a relatively pure state; from their point of view what requires explanation is not so much the movement of the pure ether (as we have seen, the ether was originally conceived as the source of life and activity) as the inertia of things like stone and metal—which is accounted for by saying that they are clogged by the impurity of the ether which constitutes them. The fact that the elements are regarded as forces as well as substances is shown by their name, the *wu hsing* (五行 "five walkings"). The same is clearly true of the Yin and Yang, for to regard them only as substances or only as forces would be self-contradictory. If the Yang ether is a substance, why does it make things move? If the Yin ether is a force, why does it make them still?

For us the primary difference between animate and inanimate is that the living body is self-moving. But it is clear that for someone who thinks in terms of self-moving ether instead of inert matter, the difference can only be one of degree. The ether is in varying degrees pure and active or impure and inert; wind and fire are not, as they are for us, different in kind from the vital fluid in man and the same in kind as stone and metal. A European reading the Sung philosophers for the first time finds himself continually asking whether *wu* 物

means "thing" or "animal", whether *shēng 生*\* means "produce" "be produced" or "give birth to" "be born": but he soon learns that in many contexts these questions are irrelevant. This does not mean that they do not draw much the same common-sense distinctions between man, animals, plants, inanimate things, as we do. Man is distinguished from animals by his ability to reason (*t'ui*).<sup>12</sup> Animals are conscious while plants are not.<sup>13</sup> Animals and plants are produced by "birth from seed", other things by "transformation of the ether". But since the Chinese shared the belief in spontaneous generation which survived in Europe until its refutation by Pasteur, the last criterion does not imply an absolute distinction between animate and inanimate.

"Q. Were men originally produced by transformation of the ether?

'A. To be sure of bringing this principle to light, we must discuss the matter at length. To take a parallel, grass and trees will grow on an island which has suddenly emerged from the sea. It is not surprising that vegetation should grow where there is soil; and once there is vegetation, naturally birds and animals are produced there.

"Q. What did you mean by the remark in your recorded sayings:<sup>14</sup> 'How can we tell whether on islands there may not be men produced by transformation of the ether'?

"A. On islands near to inhabited land there are certainly none; but for all we know there may be such men in extremely remote places.

"Q. If there are now no people in the world without father and mother, why are men no longer produced by transformation of the ether, as they used to be?

"A. There are two kinds of things. Some are produced solely by transformation, for example fireflies, which are born from decaying grass. Things of this sort are transformed of themselves when the time comes for them to be transformed. There are also things which originate by transformation of the ether but are afterwards reproduced by seed. Thus a few days after a man has put on new clothes lice may be born inside them. This is a case of transformation; but once transformed the ether is not transformed again, but reproduced by seed. This principle is quite clear." (YS, 220/6-11)

The distinction between principle and ether in man does not by any means correspond to our division between mind and matter. The

\* p.47

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

Ch'êngs and their successors agree that man's unchanging nature (conceived as a substance inside him) is principle; as to whether the mind is principle or ether, they have conflicting views and are often evasive.\* This is because they find it hard to reconcile their dualism with the traditional conception of the passions as the nature responding to stimulation; there is no sign that they see any inherent difficulty in supposing that the mind is ether, and Chu Hsi several times says that it is.† Europeans who make an absolute distinction between mind and body do so on the grounds that although thoughts, emotions and desires continually change and have a beginning and end in time, they lack other characteristics of matter such as mass and extension in space. But the Neo-Confucians do not share the assumptions on which this description is based. For them mass is not a necessary characteristic of ether but a proof of its impurity; "form" is characterized by limits in time as well as in space, while principle is necessarily unchanging.

Approaching the question from another point of view, the concept of matter depends primarily on sight and touch, that of *ch'i* on smell and internal bodily sensations. According to the modern Western view, we perceive the same material things in different ways through the external senses, and similarly perceive what goes on in our material bodies through internal senses (for example, the kinæsthetic sensation of lifting an arm). The great distinction, for Western dualists, is between mental activities and bodily movements, although it is sometimes hard for them to draw the dividing line in practice (for example, between willing as an exertion of the mind, and kinæsthetic sensations of incipient muscular movements). The Neo-Confucian assumption is rather that through different senses we perceive entities substantial in varying degrees; the dividing line made by dualists is between unchanging principle on the one hand, and on the other the changing mind and such entities as smells, which are hardly more substantial. (Traces of the idea that sounds, smells, and tastes are entities less material than the things we see and touch remain embedded in the English language also; we do not speak of "sights" and "touches" in the same way.) The Neo-Confucians are quite willing to ascribe form to some mental entities, as we have seen them doing with smells and sounds. Thus the "flood-like ether" (*hao-jan chih ch'i* 浩然之氣) of Mencius, the moral energy,

\* pp.51-3, 62-5      † p.65

thought of as a fund of pure ether, which is accumulated by consistent right action, is said to have concrete form (*hsing-t'i* 形體, "form and body"). Purpose or will (*chih* 志)\* is also said to have "form and image" (*hsing-hsiang* 形象), a vaguer term which tends to be used when form is being attributed to something rather insubstantial.<sup>15</sup>

"As for the 'flood-like ether', to call it ether implies that there is a thing which to some extent has concrete form. Similarly purpose definitely has 'form and image', although it is imperceptible [literally 'what trace is there?']."(YS, 164/11)

Since principle is the same in all, all differences between men are differences in the constitution of their ether; and the style, manner, air, by which the temperament of any human type is revealed are the outward signs of the ether (*ch'i-hsiang* 氣象).

"Q. Is not carelessness in speech due to the ether being unsettled?

"A. This requires training. If we train ourselves until careful speech comes naturally, the ether of which we are constituted is changed. To study until this change has been effected is to achieve something. Man is nothing but a product of training. Consider the differences in manner (*ch'i-hsiang*) between a scholar, a general and a hereditary noble. They cannot have been like this from birth; it is simply due to training." (YS, 211/8-10)

The manner in which things interact, at every level from the "two ethers" down to the "innumerable things" which are perpetually assembling out of the ether and dispersing into it, is explained by means of the two terms *kan* 感 "act on, excite" and *ying* 應 "answer, respond". The natural English equivalents are "stimulation" and "response". These concepts occupy much the same place in Sung philosophy as causation in the West. If it is assumed that things consist of inert matter, it is natural to think in terms of "effects" which passively allow themselves to be pushed by "causes". But if inert matter is only the essentially active ether in an impure state, this kind of action will only be of minor importance; in the purer ether, when A acts on B, B will not only be moved by it, but will respond actively. Yi-ch'uan says:

"Within heaven and earth there is nothing but stimulation and response. What else is there?"

(YS, 168/14, cf. Ming-tao WS, 12/15B/2)

"To stimulate is to move; if there is stimulation there must be

\* p.61

response. Whatever moves stimulates, and what is stimulated must respond. That to which it responds again stimulates it, and when stimulated it again responds, so that the process is endless."

(YC, 3/4A/2-4)

The Yin ether responds to the Yang and in turn stimulates it, so that throughout heaven and earth there is a perpetual alternation of expansion and contraction, movement and stillness, light and darkness, heat and cold.

"The looper caterpillar moves by first contracting and then stretching; for without contracting it could not stretch, and it is only after stretching that it can contract. In the caterpillar one can see the principles of stimulation and response." (YC, 3/4A/5-6)<sup>16</sup>

Chu Hsi distinguishes between external and internal stimulation, the latter (movement and stillness, going and coming, speech and silence) referring to the interaction of Yin and Yang within the body:

"Q. Is all stimulation internal?

"A. Certainly there are things which are stimulated from within; but in addition there is certainly stimulation from outside. Examples of the former are the alternations of movement and stillness, going and coming; these are merely due to mutual stimulation of successive states of the same thing. When a man finishes speaking he must be silent, and when his silence ends he must speak; and this is internal stimulation. But if another man calls to one from outside, this can only be called external stimulation."<sup>17</sup>

These terms, which are already found in the appendices of the *Book of Changes*,<sup>18</sup> are combined with a more recent pair, *t'i* 體 "substance" and *yung* 用 "function". These, together with *hsiang* 相 "quality", had long been used by the Buddhists;<sup>19</sup> they had been current in Confucianism and Taoism since the Chin dynasty (A.D. 265-419),<sup>20</sup> but even in the Sung it was still possible for Ch'ao Yüeh-chih to criticize their use as Buddhist.<sup>21</sup> The word *t'i* (literally "body") has a wide range of meanings, but it resembles the English word "substance" in being used both for a solid body and also, as in this pair of terms, for what is assumed to underlie the changing surface of a thing. Chang Tsai says:

"That which has never been absent [that is, through all transformations] is what is meant by substance."<sup>22</sup>

The *yung* of a thing is its activity, its response when stimulated. The use of this term (literally "use") is a reminder that, as we have

already observed in connexion with the principles of things,\* natural objects are assumed to serve ends like man-made objects, an assumption shared by the West until the development of science with its suspicion of final causes. According to Chu Hsi's disciple Ch'én Ch'un:

"That which is one whole within is the substance; its response when stimulated is the function."<sup>23</sup>

According to the thirteenth-century list of definitions *Hsing-li tzu-hsün*:

"When something is still, that which is united in its original state, with everything there is included in it,<sup>24</sup> is what is meant by 'substance'.

"Once it moves, the varying response which appears according to circumstances, is what is meant by 'function'.<sup>25</sup>

Chu Hsi says:

"That water flows or stops or is stirred into waves is its function. The substratum [literally 'bone'] of the water, which may flow, stop, or be stirred up, is its substance. The body is substance, eyesight, hearing, and the movement of hand and foot are functions. The hand is substance, the fingers moving and lifting is function."<sup>26</sup>

The other term used by the Buddhists, *hsiang* "quality", was not used by Confucianism. Although it is difficult, when discussing Sung philosophy in English, to avoid speaking of properties or qualities or characteristics or states, these words have no equivalents in Neo-Confucian terminology. Concrete things have form (the typical forms being square and round), the five colours, the five sounds, the five tastes, and the five smells, and all these can be summed up by saying that things have "form and colour" (*hsing sè* 形 色). But of course this phrase cannot be transferred to such entities as the Way, which are "without form and colour". The awkwardness with which Neo-Confucians deal with terms which cannot be said to indicate either substances or functions is well illustrated by Yi-ch'uān's observations on "equilibrium" (*chung* 中), literally "middle" (not leaning to one side), the state of the nature when it is not stimulated from outside.† His disciple Lü Ta-lin had claimed that "Equilibrium is the nature", to which Yi-ch'uān replies:

"To say that equilibrium is the nature is altogether unsatisfactory. 'Equilibrium' is [a term] by which we describe the 'body and parts'

\* p.18      † p.51 f

(*t'i-tuan 體段*)<sup>27</sup> of the nature." He adds in a note: "Not that the nature can be said to have a 'body and parts'; we are speaking metaphorically [literally 'borrowing this to explain that']", and then continues: "If we call heaven round and earth square, have we the right to say that roundness is heaven and squareness is earth?"

(YCWC, 5/10A/12f)

The separate classification of qualities in European and Indian philosophy is no doubt connected with the existence of the adjective as a separate part of speech in Indo-European languages. In Chinese there is no formal difference between verb and adjective, although there are clear differences between on the one hand the verb and adjective (linked as predicate to nouns by simple juxtaposition, negated by *pu 不*) and on the other the noun (generally linked as predicate to other nouns by a copula *yeh 也*, *shih 是*, negated by *fei 非*, *pu shih 不是*). In Indo-European languages the existence of the adjective invites us to distinguish a separate class of qualities, and also to assimilate under this heading very dissimilar ways of talking about things. (Thus since we can say "birds are oviparous" for "birds lay eggs", we are tempted to think of "oviparousness" as a quality inhering in birds as "redness" is conceived to inhere in apples.) On the other hand the Chinese language discourages those who think in it from distinguishing any special class of qualities. The difference between noun and verb corresponds more or less with that drawn by Sung scholars between "solid words" (*shih-tzü 實字*) and "void words" (*hsü-tzü 虛字*), and it is reflected in the difference between substance and function, as well as in the distinctions made in Chinese between different senses of such English words as "thing" and "change", between *wu 物* (object) and *shih 事* (affair, activity), between *hua 化* (transformation of an object into something else) and *pien 變* (change from movement to rest, from spring to summer, from good government to bad). But the Sung philosophers are aware of adjectives merely as a troublesome class of "void words" which do not indicate functions. When Chu Hsi is faced with Yi-ch'uan's difficulty over *chung*, "equilibrium", he says:

"*Chung* is a void word, while *li* is a solid word."<sup>28</sup>

The Ch'eng brothers accept current views of the ether without adding much of their own; and in this exposition it has often been convenient to quote other writers who express the same views more directly. There is, however, one point on which Yi-ch'uan holds strong

personal opinions; he insists that the alternation of Yang and Yin is not simply the expansion and contraction of persisting ether, but that there is a continuous generation of new and annihilation of old ether. This is illustrated by the way we breathe, for it is assumed that what we breathe out is produced from the "primary ether" (*chén-yüan chih ch'i* 真元之氣) within the body, and that the air we breathe in merely nourishes it without becoming part of it. This is interesting as a reminder that the ether is still in the first place air and breath, and that its contraction and expansion are seen after the analogy of breathing in and out.

"The primary ether is the source from which ether is produced: it is not mixed with ether from outside, but merely nourished by it. It is like the case of a fish in water; the life of the fish is not made by water, it is only that it cannot live unless it is nourished by the water. Men live in the ether of heaven and earth exactly as fish live in water. As for eating and drinking, both are ways of nourishing ourselves with external ether. Breathing in and out are nothing but the mechanism of the body opening and closing. What is breathed out is not the ether which is breathed in. But the primary ether can of itself produce ether. The entering ether is simply drawn in at the time when the body closes; it is not needed to assist the primary ether." (YS, 183/4-7)

"To say that the retracted ether is again required as the material of the extending ether is a complete misunderstanding of the transformations of heaven and earth. The transformations of heaven and earth are an unending process of spontaneous production. Why should creation depend on perished forms and retracted ether? To take an example near at hand in one's own body, the opening and closing, going and coming of the ether can be seen in breathing. What is breathed out does not necessarily depend on what is breathed in; ether is produced spontaneously. The ether of man is produced from the primary ether; the ether of heaven is also produced spontaneously by an unending process." (YS, 164/13-165/1)

"With regard to the tides, when the sun comes out the water dries up, so that the tide withdraws; the water which has dried up no longer exists. When the moon comes out the tide-water is produced; but it is not the water which has dried up which makes the tide. This is the ending and beginning, opening and closing of the ether; it is what the *Book of Changes* means by 'The alternation of opening and closing is called mutation'." (YS, 180/10f)<sup>29</sup>

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> YL, 3/4B/3, 1/5A/12-5B/7.<sup>2</sup> YL, 1/6A/8-10, 94/3A/12-3B/2, 4B/5-8.<sup>3</sup> Sung 135/3.<sup>4</sup> CLHC, 2/1.<sup>5</sup> CTCS, 24/1.<sup>6</sup> Le Gall 30.<sup>7</sup> Sung 303/4.<sup>8</sup> *Hu-tzü chih-yen*, 3/12B/1<sup>9</sup> Bruce, 110f.<sup>10</sup> Le Gall, 29.<sup>11</sup> CTCS, 27/7.<sup>12</sup> YS, 34/13?, 35/7?, 59/6?<sup>13</sup> YS, 345/9.<sup>14</sup> YS, 178/11-13.<sup>15</sup> For *hsing-hsiang* see YS, 222/12, YL, 74/27B/2.<sup>16</sup> On the *Great Appendix*, Sung, 298/4f.<sup>17</sup> YL, 95/23A/12-24B/3.<sup>18</sup> Sung, 135/3.<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Ta-shêng ch'i-hsin lun*, 575C/24-28.<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Chou-Yi Wang Han chu*, 7/4A/2f.<sup>21</sup> *Sung-shan wén chi*, 13/17A/6-17B/2.<sup>22</sup> CTCS, 41/9.<sup>23</sup> *Chu-tzü ch'uán-shu*, 44/36B/3f.

<sup>24</sup> The reference to "everything there is" being in the substance can be ignored; the author is evidently thinking primarily of the nature and passions and introducing into the definition the Neo-Confucian doctrine that the principles of all things are present in the nature.

<sup>25</sup> *Hsing-li tzü-hsün*, 37/6f.<sup>26</sup> YL, 6/2B/10-3A/1.

<sup>27</sup> *T'i-tuan* is used elsewhere by Neo-Confucians in contexts where we might speak of qualities. Cf. YS, 142/6, *Shang-ts'ai yü lu* A, 1B/6, *Wu-feng chi*, 2/45B/8f. YL, 6/13A/6f, 62/25B/9, 32B/10-11, 95/20B/11, 34A/9. I have seen the word nowhere else, and have not been able to find it in any dictionary.

<sup>28</sup> YL, 62/32B/10f. Chu Hsi also uses the distinction between solid and void words in his controversy with Lu Chiu-yüan (CLHC, 39/13-15). My friend Mr Gordon Downer, who has made a special study of Chinese ideas of grammar, tells me that as far as he has been able to discover these terms originated during the Sung dynasty and were not widely used until the Southern Sung. An account of these and other grammatical words, in which their connexion with substance and function is noticed, may be found in Yuan Jen-lin's preface (dated 1710) to his *Hsü-tzü shuo*.

<sup>29</sup> Sung, 298/4f.

#### 4. HSING (NATURE)

There is one speculative problem which has always fascinated Chinese writers, even those who otherwise show little interest in philosophy. This is the problem of human nature; one is sometimes inclined to wonder whether there is anyone who has not left, somewhere in his collected works, an essay comparing the opinions of Mencius (fourth century B.C.) that it is good, of Hsün-tzü (third century B.C.) that it is bad, and of Yang Hsiung (52 B.C.-A.D. 18) that it is a mixture of good and bad. The final victory of the Mencian view during the Sung dynasty was due to the influence of Chu Hsi, whose solution was borrowed from Yi-ch'uan.

Confucians are moralists before everything else, and the question behind their discussions of human nature is always "Why ought I to do what I do not want to do?" The answer they would like to give is "because ultimately I do want to, because wanting otherwise comes from a misunderstanding of my true nature". But this conflicts with common experience, which forces us to admit that evil as well as good inclinations are natural, present in us from birth and independent of outside influence. It is the tension between the need to justify morality, and the evidence of experience, which generates the greatest problem of Confucian philosophy. Unlike some other Chinese problems, it is not at all foreign to us; in one form or another it is common to all naturalistic moralities in the West also. For Christians, of course, the problem is different; the authority for morality is God, and the revolt of our natural inclinations against God's will is evidence that our nature is corrupt, and that we can will good only by divine grace. But for Confucians, as for Western humanists, the issue is not so much between good and evil as between good and morally neutral or mixed. The idea that man's nature is evil occurred to Hsün-tzü at a time when China had been laid waste by seemingly endless war, just as it occurs to many non-Christians in the twentieth century; but for most Confucians this doctrine is not simply mistaken, it is morally dangerous. In the last resort there can be no reason for a Confucian to act against the grain of his nature.

During the previous thousand years, although there had been a few followers of Mencius and Hsün-tzü,<sup>1</sup> it had been usual to accept one of several intermediate positions, which were distinguished with a subtlety and precision unusual in Confucian philosophy:

- (a) The nature is a mixture of good and bad, either of which can be developed at the expense of the other—the theory of Yang Hsiung.<sup>2</sup>
- (b) The nature is different in different individuals; the quality of the naturally good can be developed by education, and the naturally bad can be restrained by fear of punishment, but neither can be altered fundamentally. Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27—c. 100) held that men differ in nature as in size and complexion.<sup>3</sup> Hsün Yüeh (A.D. 148—209) and Han Yü (768—824) claimed that there are three grades of human nature, good, intermediate and bad, of which only the second is capably of change.<sup>4</sup>
- (c) The nature is neither good nor bad—a theory which is found in at least two forms:

(i) It is neutral, as capable of a bad as of a good development—the view of Kao-tzü (fourth century B.C.) attacked by Mencius.

(ii) To do good is in accordance with the nature, to do evil goes against it; but the nature itself cannot be called good.\*

According to Tung Chung-shu (second century B.C.) good is like the rice and the nature like the rice-shoots; "The nature has the elements of good but cannot be considered good."<sup>5</sup> A similar view was common in the early Sung; its exposition by Hu Hu-hsü (twelfth century A.D.) shows how nearly it can approach to the Mencian view:

"The nature is the innermost mystery of heaven and earth and the spirits; good is inadequate to describe it, let alone evil."

"Q. What do you mean?

"A. I was told by my late father [Hu An-kuo] 'What gives Mencius a unique position among scholars is his knowledge of the nature'. When I asked what he meant, he replied: 'The assertion of Mencius that the nature is good is an exclamation of admiration; he was not using "good" as the opposite of "evil" '."<sup>6</sup>

During the early Sung the authority of Mencius was still a matter of controversy,<sup>7</sup> and most of the prominent scholars rejected his view of human nature. Of the scholars outside the Neo-Confucian movement, Ssü-ma Kuang defends the theory of Yang Hsiung (a) and Li Kou that of Han Yü (b),<sup>8</sup> while Wang An-shih seems to regard the nature as neutral (c)(i):

\* p.134f

"The nature produces the passions. After there are passions good and evil take shape, but the nature cannot be described as good or evil."<sup>9</sup>

But there are also passages in which he comes nearer to the opinion that it is a mixture of good and evil.<sup>10</sup> According to Su Shih the Way and the nature (which he declares to be related as sound is related to hearing) cannot be called good although to follow them is good (c) (ii):

"Good is putting the nature into effect. Mencius was unable to see the nature, only seeing its effects."<sup>11</sup>

Finally Ou-yang Hsiu repudiates the entire problem as an abstraction with which the sages did not concern themselves.<sup>12</sup>

The doctrine of the goodness of human nature has been Confucian orthodoxy for so long that it is somewhat surprising to find that in the eleventh century Yi-ch'uan's advocacy of it was quite exceptional, even among those later classed as Neo-Confucians. Chou Tun-yi regarded the nature as a mixture of good and bad (a):<sup>13</sup>

剛善剛惡，柔亦如之。中焉止矣 “There is hard that is good and hard that is bad; the same is true of the soft. Stop at their mean.” (The second part of a section, covered by the second word in the heading, “nature”.)

性者剛柔善惡。中而已矣 “The nature is hard and soft, good and bad. All that matters is the mean.”<sup>13</sup> Explaining this, he says: “The good hardness is to be dutiful, honest, resolute, heroic, firm; the bad is to be violent, narrow, arrogant. The good softness is pity, obedience, gentleness; the bad is weakness, hesitancy, cunning . . . Therefore the sages established education, so that the people themselves change what is bad in them, themselves reach and stop at the mean.”

In accordance with this view, Chou Tun-yi more than once speaks of good and evil as originating together:

"When the five natures [of the five elements] were stimulated and moved, good and bad were separated and the innumerable activities began."

"Integrity [the state before stimulation] is non-action. The beginnings of movement (*chi* 氣) are good and bad."<sup>14</sup>

Both of the thinkers most closely associated with Yi-ch'uan, his brother and Chang Tsai, supported the last of the intermediate positions (c)(ii). Ming-tao's discussion of human nature will be considered in its place.\* Commenting on a passage in the *Great Appendix*,

\* pp.131-6

"What succeeds it [the Way] is goodness; that which completes it is the nature."<sup>15</sup> Chang Tsai says:

"Before the nature is complete, there are good and bad mixed. Hence by resolutely continuing in goodness, one becomes [wholly] good. When evil has been entirely removed, the result is that good disappears with it. Therefore the text ceases to refer to 'goodness' and says 'That which completes ی is the nature'."<sup>16</sup>

Even among the disciples of the Ch'êngs we find Hsieh Liang-tso saying:

"It is not that the nature is incapable of evil; but evil does not come from the nature in its perfection."<sup>17</sup>

The word *hsing* 性 "nature" is phonetically related to *shêng* 生, and is represented by the same character with the addition of the heart radical. The word *shêng* functions in different contexts as a transitive verb, an intransitive verb, or an adjective:

Transitive verb: "give birth to" (child), "grow" (hair, boils).

Intransitive verb: "be born" "be grown" (also "live", opposite *ssü* 死 "die")

Adjective: "raw" (food), opposite *shou* 熟 "cooked"—as it is when born or grown, before being influenced from outside.

Compare *hsing*:

Noun: "nature" . . . What is in us from birth, before being influenced from outside.

Yi-ch'u'an uses three ancient definitions of *hsing* derived from Mencius and the *Doctrine of the Mean*:

(a) 天命之謂性 "The decree of heaven is what is meant by nature." (*Doctrine of the Mean*)<sup>18</sup> To say that something is decreed by heaven is to say that human effort cannot alter it; so our nature is what we cannot help being.\*

(b) 生之謂性 "Inborn (*shêng*) is what is meant by nature." (Kao-tzü)<sup>19</sup> The nature is what is in us from birth in contrast to what is learned. Legge, the great nineteenth-century translator of the Classics, translates "Life is what is called nature", on the authority of Chu Hsi's comment:

"*Shêng* indicates that by which men and animals have knowledge and movement."

But Chu Hsi does not mean that *shêng* is the source of life; he is merely giving knowledge and movement as examples of activities

\* p.23

which do not need to be learned. This is clear from his answer to a question on the same passage:

"Kao-tzü only says that what goes back to birth is nature—for example, that the hands and feet move, that the eye looks and the ear listens, and that the mind has knowledge."<sup>20</sup>

(c) 天下之言性也則故而已矣 "What everyone speaks of as 'nature' is simply *ku*." (Mencius)<sup>21</sup> *Ku* (primarily "old") is what lies behind something, usually its reason or cause. Yi-ch'uan assumes, although this is open to question, that Mencius accepts the equivalence, and explains *ku* as meaning "what something is like fundamentally" 本如此 (是).<sup>22</sup>

It is perhaps necessary to insist that *hsing* is definitely a noun meaning "nature" and not an adjective meaning "natural". Chu Hsi was to some extent aware of the danger of hypostasizing the nature:

"The nature is only 'how we should be' (性只是合如此底), it is only principle; it is not that there is some *thing*".<sup>23</sup>

But the general tendency of the Neo-Confucians, which Chu Hsi himself does not altogether escape, is to think of the nature as a substance present inside man from his birth, which is responsible for all that is not due to external influence. To say that anything is "nature" implies that it is part of this substance; activities which we should call "natural" but which are not part of it are merely said to be derived from the nature:

"These five norms are nature." (YS, 115/2?)  
but

"Do joy and anger come from the nature?" (YS, 226/3)

Yi-ch'uan's dualism of *li* and *ch'i* gives him a new approach to the problem of the nature. Man, like everything else, is composed of ether and follows or should follow principle. He is inwardly aware of principle as the "five norms" (*wu ch'ang* 五常 benevolence, duty, propriety, wisdom and good faith) which are present inside him from birth without having to be learned. But he also possesses from birth an endowment of ether, which accounts for his innate personal characteristics and which may be pure or impure; and his capacity to follow principle, his moral stuff (*ts'ai* 才, generally translated "talent"; related to *ts'ai* 材 "timber") depends on its degree of purity. By moral training he gradually refines the ether, so that it becomes easier to follow principle.<sup>24</sup> Since both the moral norms and the endowment of ether are in us from birth, the term "nature" has been applied

indiscriminately to the two of them.<sup>23</sup> "The decree of heaven is what is meant by nature" refers to the former, the nature proper, which is of course good. But "Inborn is what is meant by nature", as well as the statement of Confucius that we are not the same but near to each other by nature,<sup>25</sup> evidently refer to the ether, which may be either good or bad. In this way Yi-ch'uuan is able to account for any statement by an author he respects which conflicts with the Mencian view of human nature. This is the theory of human nature which Chu Hsi later made orthodox, making no addition except to distinguish the endowment of ether from the nature proper by the name *ch'i-chih chih hsing* (氣質之性) borrowed from Chang Tsai.<sup>26</sup>

"Q. Is there any difference between 'Inborn is what is meant by nature', and 'The decree of heaven is what is meant by nature'?

"A. The word 'nature' is not to be explained always in the same way. In the former passage it only means [the ether] with which we are endowed, while 'The decree of heaven is what is meant by nature' refers to the principles of the nature. When people say that someone's 'heaven-decreed nature' is soft and lax, or hard and energetic, it is his endowment that is meant; for in common speech any quality that goes back to birth is ascribed to heaven. As for the principles of the nature, they are entirely good. What is called heaven is the self-dependent (*tzü-jan*) principle." (YS, 343/1-3)

"Q. 'By nature we are near to each other, by practice we draw apart.'<sup>25</sup> The nature is one; why does he only say 'near to each other'?

"A. This merely refers to the 'nature' of the term 'nature and constitution', as in such common phrases as 'energetic by nature', 'lax by nature'. How can laxity and energy belong to the nature? This is to use 'nature' as in 'Inborn is what is meant by nature' . . . Whenever the nature is mentioned, it is necessary to consider what the speaker is aiming at. Thus the human nature which is said to be good is the root of the nature; while 'Inborn is what is meant by nature' applies to the endowment." (YS, 229/2-7)

"Q. If at bottom human nature is enlightened, why is there delusion?

"A. This point needs to be understood. Mencius is right in saying that human nature is good. Even such men as Hsün-tzü and Yang Hsiung were ignorant of the nature; what makes Mencius unique among scholars is his understanding of it. The nature is devoid of

evil; it is to the talent that evil belongs. The nature is principle, and principle is the same from Yao and Shun [two ancient sages] to the man in the street. The talent is an endowment from the ether, and in the ether there is both pure and impure. Those endowed with the pure ether become worthy, those endowed with the impure ether become foolish." (YS, 226/7-11)

"Q. Does the talent come from the ether?

"A. If the ether is pure, the talent is good, if impure it is bad. Those who are endowed from birth with completely pure ether become sages, those with completely impure ether become fools. The men whom Han Yü wrote of and Kung-tu-tzü asked about<sup>27</sup> are examples of this. But this applies only to the sages who know good from birth. As for those who know it by learning, all may arrive at good and return to the roots of the nature, whether their ether is pure or impure. 'Yao and Shun had it by nature' refers to knowledge from birth; 'T'ang and Wu recovered it' to knowledge by learning.<sup>28</sup> When Confucius says that 'the highest wisdom and the lowest folly do not change',<sup>29</sup> he does not mean that change is impossible [literally 'there is not a principle that they do not change']. There are only two reasons why they do not change—self-injury and self-abandonment.

"Q. What is the talent like?

"A. It is like timber. To pursue the analogy, whether wood is crooked or straight is its 'nature'; whether it is suitable for making a wheel or shaft, a beam, a rafter, is its 'talent'. Nowadays when people say 'talented' they refer to excellence of talent. The talent is a man's resources [of character]; if he cultivates it in accordance with the nature, even a completely evil man is capable of becoming good.

"Q. What is the nature like?

"A. The nature is principle; it is this that is meant by *li-hsing* ('principle-nature').<sup>30</sup> The principles of the world, if we trace them back to their source, always prove to be good. Before joy and anger, sorrow and pleasure are emitted, where is evil? If they are emitted in due order, in no circumstances shall we do evil." (YS, 318/3-9)<sup>31</sup>

By approaching the old problem of the goodness of human nature from an entirely new point of view, that of the distinction between principle and ether, Yi-ch'uan was thus able to find a solution which has satisfied most Confucians for the last seven hundred years. But he achieved this at the cost of introducing a new difficulty. Yi-ch'uan took over without revision the accepted doctrine that the passions are

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

the response of the nature to outside stimulation. But if the passions are not different in kind from the nature, must we infer that they also are principle? Would it not be more plausible to regard them as disturbances of the ether? It is clear that Yi-ch'uan's dualism does not agree with the traditional psychology as well as did the monism of Chou Tun-yi and Chang Tsai, for whom the universe and the mind have a common generative source out of which the ether emerges. This is well illustrated by a saying of the twelfth-century monist Hu Hung:

"Water has a source, that is why there is no limit to its flow; a tree has a root, that is why there is no limit to its growth; the ether has the nature, that is why its revolutions are unending."<sup>44</sup>

The traditional account of the passions (*ch'ing* 情) was based on the *Doctrine of the Mean*:

"Before joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure are emitted, there is said to be equilibrium; when they are all emitted in due order, there is said to be harmony. Equilibrium is the great root of the world; harmony is the universal way of the world."<sup>45</sup>

The nature is originally in equilibrium; when acted on by outside things it emits the passions (of which joy in and anger against things, sorrow and pleasure, are taken as representative), which should be in harmony with the external situation. The nature is the substance, the passions are the function;<sup>46</sup> the relation between them is 'that of the water and the waves.'

The word we have translated "equilibrium" is *chung* 中, literally "middle". Yi-ch'uan explains it as meaning "in the middle" or "not leaning to one side":

"Equilibrium is simply not leaning to one side; if it leans it is not in equilibrium." (YS, 177/13)

"Q. Do 'the way of the mean (*chung*)' and 'Before joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure are emitted there is said to be equilibrium (*chung*)' refer to the same thing?

"A. No. In the latter case it means 'in the middle'. The word is the same but its use is different.

"Q. Before joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure are emitted, may one seek for equilibrium?

"A. No. Thinking in order to seek for it before they are emitted is none the less thinking; and when you think, [passion] is already emitted. [Note by the disciple Liu An-chieh: 'Thought is of the same

TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

kind as joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure'.] As soon as it is emitted, there is said to be harmony; one cannot call it equilibrium."

(YS, 222/4-6)

Ming-tao says:

"'Equilibrium is the great root of the world'—the straight *Li* running vertically up and down through heaven and earth."

(YS, 145/5)

Yi-ch'uan is careful to insist that *chung* is a characteristic of the nature, not the nature itself, although the absence of any terminology to describe qualities or states compels him to go a long way round to make this point. His disciple Lü Ta-lin had assumed that *chung* meant simply "the middle", and had declared that "The middle is the nature", and that "The middle is where the Way comes from".

"To say that '*chung* is the nature' is altogether unsatisfactory. *Chung* is [the term] by which we describe the 'body and parts' (*t'i-tuan*)\* of the nature. [He adds a note: 'Not that the nature can be said to have a "body and parts"'; we are speaking metaphorically.] If we call heaven round and earth square, does that mean that we can say that roundness is heaven and squareness is earth? Since squareness and roundness cannot be called heaven and earth, the innumerable things decidedly do not come from squareness and roundness; and since *chung* cannot be called the nature, how can one say that the Way comes from *chung*? For the meaning of the term *chung* is derived from going too far and not going far enough. . . . Not leaning to one side is what is meant by *chung*. The Way is always *chung*; hence *chung* is used to describe the Way, but if you say that the Way comes from *chung*, does that mean that you can say that since heaven is round and earth square it is from roundness and squareness that heaven and earth come?" (YCWC, 5/10A/12-10B/6)

The passions are the activity of the nature when it is stimulated, related to it as the waves are related to the water:

"It is the nature which is the root: the passions are movements of the nature. How can the passions ever be bad?" (YS, 34/10?)

"Q. Do joy and anger come from the nature?

"A. Certainly. As soon as there is life and consciousness there is the nature; when there is the nature there are the passions. Without the nature how could there be passions?

"Q. What of the view that joy and anger come from outside?

\* p.43, n.27

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

"A. They do not come from outside; when stimulated from outside they are emitted from within.

"Q. Does the nature have joy and anger as water has waves?

"A. Yes. To be transparent, and level and still like a mirror, is the nature of water. When it meets with pebbles, or the ground is uneven, it may overflow; when the wind moves over it, it may be stirred into waves. But how can this be the nature of the water? Within human nature there are only the 'four beginnings' [benevolence, duty, propriety, wisdom]; how can all the evil men do be in it? But without the water, how could there be waves? Without the nature, how could there be passions?" (YS, 226/3-6)

If the passions are simply movements of the nature, it would seem that they must share the goodness of the nature. But even in the two passages just given, there are contradictory views on this point; and Yi-ch'u'an does not seem to have made up his mind as to whether the passions are essentially good or whether they can be either good or bad.<sup>34</sup> Further, it is not easy to see how this view of the passions is to be reconciled with the claim that the nature is principle. Are we to conceive joy and anger as the principles which our ether follows when we are joyful and when we are angry? Yi-ch'u'an does not commit himself on this point.<sup>35</sup>

With one exception, the five "norms" which compose the nature all have corresponding passions. The principle of benevolence is visible in the feeling of "sympathy and distress" at another's suffering; of duty, through "shame and dislike" for a wrong action; of propriety, through "deference and humility" before other people; of wisdom, through "approving and disapproving" of right and wrong. These four passions are described by Mencius<sup>36</sup> as the "four beginnings" (*tuan* 端, "first appearing point"; the original form of the character, 艹, is traditionally said to represent a sprouting plant). By this he meant that it is from these that the four virtues develop; for example, the sympathy and distress which all men feel spontaneously on seeing a child fall into a well is the shoot from which benevolence can grow. Mencius did not ask the question whether benevolence is the altruistic principle or the feeling of good will, whether it is a normative or a psychological term. Yi-ch'u'an on the other hand sees the distinction clearly, and insists that while benevolence is the principle that others should be treated as one with the self and belongs to the nature, "sympathy and distress" are to be classed among the passions. (It is

curious that in spite of this he sometimes uses the term "four beginnings" of the norms themselves as in the last passage quoted.)<sup>37</sup>

"If there is benevolence of course there is unity [with others]; it is unity which characterizes benevolence.\* On the other hand sympathetic distress belongs to love; it is passion, not nature. Consideration for others is the gate by which we enter benevolence, but is not benevolence. By means of the feeling of distress we know of the existence of benevolence." (YS, 185/12f)

Chu Hsi comments:

"Master Ch'êng says: 'By means of the feeling of distress we know of the existence of benevolence'. This explanation is precise and to the point. He does not say that distress is benevolence, nor that it has nothing to do with finding benevolence. His explanation of benevolence may be illustrated by the first shoots of a tree. By means of the shoots one can tell that there is a root underneath; but one does not say either that they are the root or that they have nothing to do with finding the root."<sup>38</sup>

Thus the *tuan* of benevolence is the beginning from which we proceed to discover it in the nature, not (as it was for Mencius) the beginning from which it develops. In his comment on the original passage in Mencius<sup>39</sup> Chu Hsi says:

"*Tuan* means 'thread-end'. When the passions are emitted we can see from them what the nature is like fundamentally—like having a thing inside and thread-ends visible outside."

There is no passion corresponding to the last of the five norms, *hsin* (信 "good faith"). *Hsin* as an adjective means "trustworthy, true", as a transitive verb, "to trust in, believe"; as a noun it is ambiguous, either "truth" or "belief". Applied to the fifth norm, *hsin* originally had the former sense, "truth", "trustworthiness", the keeping of promises to others; but for Yi-ch'uan the two senses are entangled, the word also implying "belief" in principle. He argues that there is no passion corresponding to *hsin* because as long as we have a principle inside us there is no belief in it; it is only when we doubt one alternative that we come to believe in the other. In the same way, as long as I take it for granted that I am facing East there is no consciousness of believing that "that is East"; it is only when doubt arises that I come to disbelieve it and to believe that "that is West". In the following passages the ambiguity in the word *hsin* makes

\* p.97

translation difficult; the argument comes out most clearly if it is translated consistently by "belief", "believe", "believed", the words "truth" and "true" being added in brackets where the ambiguity is especially obtrusive:

"Q. Why do not the 'four beginnings' include belief?

"A. Within the nature there are only the 'four beginnings', there is no belief. It is because there is disbelief that there is the word 'belief'. For example, when East is plainly East and West is plainly West, what need is there of the word 'belief'? It is only because there is disbelief that there is the word 'belief'." (YS, 205/2f)

"Q. After the student can see this principle (*tao-li*), will his vision of it be clearer when he genuinely believes in it and earnestly acts on it?

"A. There is more than one kind of seeing; but if you really see something, even belief is unnecessary.

"Q. When we see the principles, does not everything fall into place?

"A. Yes. Wherever there are principles East is East and West is West; what need is there of belief? Whenever we speak of belief, it is only because one alternative is disbelieved (untrue) that we see that the other is believed (true). That Mencius does not mention belief among the 'four beginnings' is also evidence of this." (YS, 323/2-4)

"Only the other four [norms] have 'beginnings', while belief has none. It is only when there is disbelief that there is belief. Once the positions of the cardinal points have been determined, one can no longer speak of belief. If you think that East is West and South is North there is disbelief (untruth); but if East is East and West is West there is no belief (truth)." (YS, 185/13f, accepting the variant in 13)

"Benevolence is disinterestedness; it is treating someone as a man. Duty is what should be; it is the standard for weighing heavy and light. Propriety is observing distinctions. Wisdom is knowing. Belief (truth) is 'that there is this' (信者有此者也). The innumerable things all have the nature; these five norms are the nature. As for feelings such as sympathetic distress, they are all passions. Whatever moves is called a passion." A disciple's note adds: "The nature is complete in itself. Belief (truth) is only 'that there is this' (信只是有此); it becomes visible only because of previous disbelief. Therefore belief is not mentioned among the 'four beginnings'." (YS, 115/1f?)

It will be observed that owing to the ambiguity of *hsin*, Yi-ch'u'an does not distinguish between the truth of a proposition and the

psychological fact of belief in it. This is connected with a significant difference between European and Chinese usage in discussing philosophy. Chinese thinkers have generally been very conscious of the difference between names and realities, largely because of the Confucian emphasis on the "correct use of names" (the purpose of which was of course moral rather than intellectual; a man must not be called a "king" when he is really a "tyrant"). Definitions are usually made according to the pattern, "Inborn is what is meant by nature" (生之謂性), where we might be inclined to say "Nature is what is inborn". On the other hand they pay very little attention to the difference between a word and a sentence, a term and a proposition. The tendency is to ask not whether the way in which two terms are linked is true or false, but whether there is or is not a reality corresponding to the name. (This is no doubt connected with the emphasis of Chinese scholarship on the meaning of separate characters and its indifference to the grammar of the sentence.) Although there are words to indicate that a statement is true (*jan* 然 "thus", *shih* 是 "right", as well as *hsin*) it is more usual to refer back from the assertion to the fact, take it as a whole, and say "There is this".

"Q. That hermits are able to know beforehand that someone is coming to see them—is there this?" (有諸)

"A. There is (有之)." (YS, 215/13f)

Thus the way to assert a principle is to say, not that it is "thus" or "right", but that "there is this principle" (有此理). Against this background, one can understand why Yi-ch'uan explains *hsin* as meaning "there is this". Within the nature there are four norms; the fifth, *hsin*, is simply having the other four. As long as benevolence is really inside me, I am benevolent without having to ask questions or make statements about it. Only when doubt arises do I make statements which are *hsin* or not *hsin*. Yi-ch'uan does not seem to be clear as to whether he means by this that they are true or false or that I believe or disbelieve them; but from this point of view the distinction is of little importance.

Since each thing has its own principle, it might be supposed that Yi-ch'uan identifies the nature with the distinctive principle of man. But this is not so; the nature is principle in general, and it includes within it the principles of all things.

"If you cannot look back into yourself, heaven's principle will be

extinguished'.<sup>40</sup> In what is called heaven's principle, the innumerable principles are all complete, there has never been any deficiency."

(YS, 33/10?)

The nature is therefore the same in all things; animals differ from men only in that the impurity of their ether is permanent, and so great that it prevents them from showing more than a few practically negligible traces of moral principle (such as the loyalty of ants to their ruler, and the otter's practice of sacrifice).<sup>41</sup>

"Dog, ox and man know what to avoid and what to approach; their nature is basically the same. It is only because they are confined by their form that animals cannot alter. The nature is like sunlight seen through a gap; the squareness or roundness of the gap does not change, yet it is the same light. It is simply that each has a different endowment. Therefore 'Inborn being what is meant by nature', Kao-tzü held that it is the same in all, Mencius that it is not." (YS, 342/8f)

At first sight these claims seem to raise insoluble problems. If the nature consists of the five norms, how can it contain all the principles of things? If all principles are complete in each thing, what becomes of the idea that each thing has its own principle? But these problems arise only because one cannot deal with Chinese philosophical terms in English without forcing them into Indo-European categories of number. The Chinese language does not regularly indicate number, and in the case of *li*, there are difficulties whenever we cannot translate it by "principle" (without the article) and are compelled to make a choice, often quite arbitrary, between "a principle" and "principles". In the Chinese phrase *pai li* 百理 (hundred *li*), the word *li* means "principle" in general, and by prefixing a number we do not commit ourselves as to whether we are dividing a unit or adding units. In the former case, we are entitled to divide it in any way we please, or to treat it as one and call it *yi li* — 理 (one *li*). But in the English "hundred principles", the plural ending already implies that there are two or more separate principles, so that when we prefix a number we must be adding them and are only permitted one result. Similarly one is at liberty in Chinese to speak of the whole ether as *yi ch'i* — 氣 (one *ch'i*) or to divide it into the *erh ch'i* 二氣 (two *ch'i*) or *wu ch'i* 五氣 (five *ch'i*); in English to say that there are two ethers implies that there cannot be one or five. It is therefore difficult to discuss Sung philosophy in English without obscuring the fact that *li* and *ch'i* are conceived, not as aggregates of units, but as wholes which can be

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

divided and sub-divided according to convenience. Thus Chu Hsi says:

"It is only that this principle may be divided into four parts, and then into eight, and then you can go on to break it up into still smaller divisions."

"Q. Since they are only one principle, why are there also said to be five norms?

"A. It is equally permissible to call them one principle or five principles. If you take them together as one, they are one; if you distinguish them, they are five."

"The Yin and Yang are only the one ether. The Yin ether flowing out becomes the Yang, the Yang ether congealing becomes the Yin. It is not really that there are two distinct things."

"The Yin and Yang can be regarded either as one or as two."

"The Supreme Ultimate is nothing but the one principle. Proceeding, it divides into the two ethers, within which what moves is the Yang and what is still is the Yin. Then it divides into the five ethers and then disperses as the innumerable things."<sup>38</sup>

Principle is one; for some purposes it is convenient to divide it into no more than five parts, but division and sub-division can go on for as long as we please. Each thing and activity has its own portion, which proves, when "extended" (*t'ui*)<sup>\*</sup> to be merely a part of the one principle. *Li* may be compared to a network of roads, and things to the counties through which they run. One can take the system as a whole, or distinguish five main roads, or go on making distinctions down to the smallest lane or footpath. The roads in different counties look different, but when "extended" always prove to belong to the same system. However, there is one point at which the analogy breaks down. To "extend" the roads in Sussex one has to go outside the county; one cannot claim that the "innumerable roads are complete" in Sussex. But to extend the principles one does not have to go outside one's own mind; so that, paradoxically, the whole of principle lies waiting to be discovered inside each individual.

\* pp.9-11

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> During the T'ang, for example, Li Ao held that the nature is good (*Li Wên kung chi*, ch.2) and Tu Mu that it is bad (*Fan-ch'uān wén chi*, 6/11B-12B).

<sup>2</sup> *Fa-yen*, 3/1A.

<sup>3</sup> *Lun-héng*, 21-25, 40-43.

<sup>4</sup> *Shén-chien*, 5/2B-4B. *Han Ch'ang-li chi*, 3/64-65.

<sup>5</sup> *Ch'un-ch'iü fan-lu*, 10/3A-7B.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

<sup>6</sup> *Hu-tzü chih-yen, yi yi* 7B/4-8. According to Chu Hsi, Yang Shih was told by the Buddhist Ch'ang Tsung or Tsung Lao that the goodness of human nature being absolute is not the opposite of evil. Hu An-kuo learned this opinion from Yang Shih and concluded that to call the nature good, since it does not imply that it is the opposite of evil, is merely an exclamation of admiration (YL, 101/30A-32B, cf. *Kuei-shan yü-lu* 4/22A/3-7).

<sup>7</sup> An anthology of criticisms of Mencius, notably Ssü-ma Kuang's *Doubts concerning Mencius*, can be found in *Shao-shih wén-chien hou-lu*, ch.11-13. Even the Ch'êngs criticized Mencius on small points (YS, 231/12-14, WS, 12/4B/10-13).

<sup>8</sup> *Wên kuo wén chéng Ssü-ma Kuang wén-chi*, 72/3A-4A. *Chih-chiang Li hsien-shêng wén-chi*, 2/8B, 15AB.

<sup>9</sup> *Wang Lin-ch'uan chi*, 7/64-65.

<sup>10</sup> *Wang Lin-ch'uan chi*, 7/20, 53-54.

<sup>11</sup> *Su-shih Yi-chuan*, 159/13-160/6, cf. *Su Tung-p'o ch'üan-chi*, 2/779.

<sup>12</sup> *Ou-yang Yung-shu chi*, 6/3-4.

<sup>13</sup> Translating after the analogy of the immediately preceding quotation. But Chu Hsi takes it as a continuous sentence: "The nature consists only of hard, soft, good, bad, and the mean" (CLHC, 92/13f, 110/2).

<sup>14</sup> CLHC, 110/1, 91/2-11, 2/4, 81/4-6.

<sup>15</sup> Sung, 280/2.

<sup>16</sup> CTCS, 227/6, cf. 43/1f.

<sup>17</sup> *Shang-ts'ai yü-lu*, 2/7B/6.

<sup>18</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 383/8.

<sup>19</sup> *Mencius*, L, 396/8.

<sup>20</sup> YL, 59/1B/7f.

<sup>21</sup> *Mencius*, L, 331/2.

<sup>22</sup> YS, 171/14, 238/1.

<sup>23</sup> YL, 5/11B/9.

<sup>24</sup> According to Chu Hsi, when the ether is pure the principles can penetrate it, when it is impure they are obstructed—as sunlight is obstructed by a roof (YL, 4/2B/11), or as the brightness of a pearl is visible through clear and invisible through dirty water (YL, 4/18A/2-5).

<sup>25</sup> *Analects*, L, 318/6.

<sup>26</sup> The term is borrowed from Chang Tsai (CTCS, 42/12); it does not occur in the works of the Ch'êng brothers except once as a variant for 性質之性 (YS, 229/2n). This variant has superseded the original reading in many texts, including those of the *Erh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu*, *Chêng yi t'ang ch'üan-shu* and *Chin-sa lu*; but there is no reason to accept it, especially since still another reading 生質之性 occurs in a reference by Chu Hsi (YL, 62/14B/11) and in a parallel passage (YS, 112/11).

<sup>27</sup> The examples of men good or evil from birth given in Han Yu's *Enquiry into the Nature* (as in Note 4 above) and in Kung-tu-tzü's question to Mencius (*Mencius*, L, 401/4-10).

<sup>28</sup> *Mencius*, L, 495/6f.

<sup>29</sup> *Analects*, L, 318/8f.

<sup>30</sup> A Buddhist term, cf. YS, 166/4.

<sup>31</sup> See also YS, 67/10f, YC, 4/11B/3-12A/4.

<sup>32</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 384/7-385/1.

<sup>33</sup> This is often asserted by Chu Hsi (e.g. YL, 5/9B/7) and is implied by Yi-ch'üan (YCWC, 5/10A/8).

<sup>34</sup> See also YS, 225/14-226/2, 318/1-3, WS, 7/2A/7?

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

<sup>33</sup> Chu Hsi, who is also evasive on this point, occasionally seems to take such a view, for example:

"The passions are only so many paths, while what goes along these paths to act in a certain way is the mind" (YL, 5/9A/3).

<sup>34</sup> *Mencius*, L, 202-203.

<sup>35</sup> YS, 204/14, 205/2, 226/5.

<sup>36</sup> YL, 53/11A/9-12.

<sup>37</sup> YL, 6/1B/4-7, CLHC, 6/10f, 7/10, 9/12f.

<sup>38</sup> *Li chi*, Couvreur, 2/53/1f.

<sup>39</sup> YS, 199/11.

<sup>40</sup> Fêng Yu-lan (p.826) claims that Chou Tun-yi regards the nature as good, in accordance with his assumption that all the major Neo-Confucian doctrines can be traced to the supposed founder of the movement. His evidence is the first section on Integrity (*ch'êng*) in the *T'ung shu*:

"Integrity is the root of being a sage."

"Great is the originating power of *Ch'ien*; the innumerable things owe to it their beginnings" (Sung, 3/1) refers to the source of integrity.

"When 'the way of *Ch'ien* changes and transforms, so that everything has its correct nature and decree" (Sung, 3/5), integrity is then established.

"It is what is pure, unmixed and perfectly good" (CLHC, 74/2-11).

But however we interpret this obscure passage the last sentence refers not to the nature, nor even to integrity, but to the creative power of the hexagram *Ch'ien*, representing heaven. This is clear from a passage in the *Changes* to which it alludes:

"Great is *Ch'ien*! It is strong, vigorous, in equilibrium, correct; it is *pure, unmixed* and refined." (Sung, 11/5)

<sup>41</sup> It has been suggested that Yi-ch'u'an's theory of the nature may have been inspired by the distinction between a basic (本然性) and a combined nature (和合性) suggested in the *Sûramgama-sûtra* (*Shou-lêng-yen ching*, Chinese text 35/17, translated Goddard, p.196). See Lin K'o-t'ang (p.12) and Yasui Kotarô (pp.635-6, 651); according to the latter the resemblance was pointed out by Tai Chen. But the Buddhist sûtra merely throws off this idea as a possibility which is immediately rejected.

<sup>42</sup> *Hu-tsü chih-yen*, 2/2A/1.

## 5. HSIN (MIND)

*Hsin* is the ordinary word for "heart", the Chinese having always located mental activities there rather than in the brain. It seems likely that when Mencius spoke of having an "unmoved heart" he was not drawing a sharp line between mental disturbances and physical palpitations. But by the time of the Sung dynasty *hsin* is used consciously in two senses, for the physical organ and for something inside it which controls the movements of the body and is the agent in knowledge. Mental activities are conceived as "functions" varying according to the stimulation of the underlying "substance" by outside things. The psychological terms used by the Sung school fall naturally into three classes:

(a) Knowledge. Animals are aware only of what they see and hear; men can also perceive principles and make inferences (*t'u*) from them; the sage has a direct insight into all principles without having to infer.<sup>1</sup>

(b) Passions. Joy in and anger against things, sorrow and pleasure, are usually taken as representative. Sometimes seven are enumerated, including love, hatred and desire.<sup>2</sup>

(c) Purpose (*chih* 志) and intentions (*yi* 意). Purpose is directed towards a general and persisting goal (learning, the Way, becoming a sage), intentions towards action in particular situations. Ming-tao, following the definition of the most ancient Chinese dictionary, the *Shuo-wen*, says:

"Purpose is where the mind is going" (WS, 2/2B/12)—assuming that the original form of the character was a combination of 心 "mind" and 芝 "go to".

According to an unattributed passage,

"There is a difference between purpose and intention. The purpose is what persists, the intentions are motions." (WS, 3/4B/6f?)

These three divisions correspond roughly with the knowing, feeling, and striving of traditional Western psychology, although desire, which for us belongs to striving, is included among the passions. However, this tripartite division is not explicitly formulated by the Neo-Confucians, and the only reason for making it is that in

practice the three kinds of mental activity tend to be discussed in isolation from each other.

For the Sung philosophers the most important question concerning the mind is how to relate it to the nature, and they are unable to agree on the answer. Of all the problems which they discuss this is the one which to us seems most obviously artificial; for although we ourselves tend to think of the mind as an insubstantial thing inside the body, it would not occur to us to suppose that there is any "nature" distinct from what is "natural". But it is perhaps worth noticing that if we accept the approach suggested in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, and developed in Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind*, "nature" and "mind" really are analogous, and we make the same mistake over the latter that the Chinese make over both words. We do tend to assume that there is an "intellect" distinct from what is "intelligent", and a "will" distinct from what is "voluntary", "mind" being a collective name for such entities.

How, then, are these two substances inside the body related? The solution of the Ch'êng brothers is that they are two different aspects of principle. When it is necessary to emphasize that moral principles are in us from birth, that they are decreed by heaven and part of us whether we like it or not, they are called the nature. The principles control the body, and from this point of view are called mind.<sup>3</sup> This identification of mind and principle implies that the Ch'êngs, unlike Chu Hsi, do not regard the mind as an organ of knowledge distinct from what it knows. The principles that we know *are* the mind, and they are evidently felt to control the body as directly as the plants are controlled by the principle that they flower in spring and fade in autumn.

"Q. Are there both good and evil in the mind?

"A. In heaven it is regarded as the decree, in a thing as its principle, in man as his nature, in control of the body as mind; all are really one. The mind is basically good; in the thoughts that it emits there is good and evil, but what has been emitted should be called 'passion' and not 'mind'.<sup>4</sup> It may be compared to water, which is only called water until it flows and becomes a stream moving in a definite direction, when it is called a 'current'." (YS, 225/14-226/2, accepting Chu Hsi's emendation in 226/2n)

"Q. Are the mind, nature and heaven spoken of by Mencius only the one principle?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

"A. Yes. Principle as such is called 'heaven'; as the endowment we receive, 'nature'; when present in man, 'mind'.

"Q. Are all [inward] operations mind?

"A. They are intentions.

"Q. Are intentions emitted by the mind?

"A. There is mind before there are intentions.

"Q. What of the statement of Mencius that the mind 'goes out and comes in at no set time'?<sup>6</sup>

"A. At bottom the mind does not go out and come in. Mencius was only referring to 'holding on to it and letting it go'.<sup>7</sup>

"Q. When a man pursues something, is it the mind that pursues it?

"A. The mind does not go out and come in. To pursue things is desire." (YS, 323/5-8)

According to Yi-ch'uan's acquaintance Ch'ao Yüeh-chih,

"Yi-ch'uan says that 'intention' (意) is a combination of 'mind' (心) and 'sound' (音). It is like striking a drum. The sound is not separate from the drum; it comes out from the drum. Intention is not separate from the mind; it is an emission of the mind."<sup>8</sup>

By identifying it with principle, which is necessarily changeless, Yi-ch'uan commits himself to holding that thoughts, passions and intentions do not belong to the mind, which is the substance underlying them. The only kind of activity which he can ascribe to mind is the direct insight into principles which in the sage is immediate and in the ordinary man generally follows but is distinct from a process of thought.<sup>9</sup>

"The mind is one; but sometimes its substance is meant [Note: 'For example, "Tranquil and unmoving"] and sometimes its function [Note: 'For example, "When stimulated it penetrates the affairs of the world"']. (YCWC, 5/12A/8f)

Unlike thought, insight into principle does not imply movement, since the principle of a thing is already inside the mind:

"When he is 'tranquil and unmoving', the innumerable things are already complete within, as thick as a forest. When he is 'stimulated and penetrates', the stimulation is merely from within; it is not that a thing has been brought from outside to stimulate him here."

(YS, 171/2)

"It is tranquil and unmoving: but when stimulated it penetrates.' Heaven's principles are present complete, none has ever been lacking;

\* p.15

they are not preserved because of the wisdom of a man like Yao or lost because of the wickedness of a man like Chieh. Between father and son, ruler and minister, there are constant principles which do not change. How should [principle] ever move? It is because it does not move that the classic says 'tranquil'; although it does not move, when stimulated it penetrates, for the stimulation is not from outside."

(YS, 45/3f?)

The principles of compassion and filial piety are in father and son, and also in the mind; when it perceives them the mind does not need to move, since they are already inside it. Yet insight must after all imply a new relation between mind and principle, and to identify them explains how we know at the cost of making it impossible that we should ever be ignorant. It is also difficult to understand why, if nature and mind are the same, the former functions as passion and the latter as insight.

Yi-ch'uan's view of the mind is another example (we have already noticed the anomalous position of the passions in his system) of the difficulties involved in imposing his dualism of principle and ether on to the traditional Confucian psychology. In practice he cannot help using the word to include passions, intentions and thoughts, in accordance with ordinary usage. In such cases he often uses the term "human mind" (*jén-hsin* 人 心) to show that he is not referring to the mind proper.<sup>9</sup> His justification for this is a passage in one of the Classics, the *Book of History*, which distinguishes between the human mind and the "Way-mind" (*tao-hsin* 道 心).<sup>10</sup>

"The human mind is insecure; the Way-mind is hard to discern."<sup>10</sup> The mind is where the Way is; what is hard to discern is the substance of the Way. The mind is indivisibly one with the Way; in relation to those who have let go of their innately good mind, it is called the Way-mind. To let go of one's innately good mind is to be insecure." (YS, 302/2f)

"The human mind is human desire, the Way-mind is heaven's principle." (WS, 2/4A/6)

It is not surprising that some of the Ch'êng school reacted in the opposite direction, refusing the name "mind" to the underlying substance which is the nature and reserving it for mental activity:

"The nature is the basic substance. What is seen in operation as eyesight, hearing, the movement of hand and foot, is mind."

(Hsieh Liang-tso)<sup>11</sup>

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

"It is not that the sages were able to give a name to the Way; there is this name by the mere fact that there is this Way. The sages called it the 'nature' to indicate its substance, and the 'mind' to indicate its function. It is necessary that the nature should move, and moving it becomes mind." (Hu Hung)<sup>12</sup>

Chu Hsi criticizes the view of Hsieh Liang-tso and politely ignores that of the Ch'êngs. He prefers the formula of Chang Tsai:

"The mind is what governs (or 'unites', *t'ung* 統) the nature and the passions."<sup>13</sup>

But he seems unable to decide whether this means that the mind is the nature and passions taken together, or that the mind is a third entity which controls the other two:

"The nature is the mind's principles, the passions are the movement of the nature, the mind is the master of the nature and the passions."<sup>14</sup>

"That the mind before it moves is regarded as the nature, after it moves as the passions, is what is meant by 'The mind is what unites the nature and the passions'.<sup>15</sup>"

He has just as much difficulty as the Ch'êngs in applying the distinction of principle and ether. In some passages he asserts that the mind is ether (a view compatible only with the former interpretation of Chang Tsai's definition):

"The mind is the active essence of the ether."

This enables him, unlike the Ch'êngs, to draw a clear distinction between the knower and the known:

"What is perceived is the mind's principles; what is able to perceive is the intelligence of the ether."

These principles are the nature, and the nature functions as the passions; but he is uncertain whether the passions are principles along which the ether of the mind moves:

"The nature is the principle that we can act in a certain way; it remains unalterably in its place. On the other hand the control of action belongs to the mind. The passions are only so many paths, while what goes along these paths to act in a certain way is the mind,"

or whether they include ether:

"It is only the nature that is unalterable; passions, mind and talent all include ether."<sup>16</sup>

Thus Yi-ch'uuan's identification of mind and principle was rejected by some of his own school and by Chu Hsi, who otherwise follows

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

him so closely. But it was revived, in a different context of ideas, by Chu Hsi's opponent Lu Chiu-yüan, and became a characteristic doctrine of the subjectivist movement which culminated in Wang Shou-jén.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> YS 34/13-35/1? 35/7?, 59/6?, 248/13f, 328/13.

<sup>2</sup> YCWC, 4/1A/7.

<sup>3</sup> The identity of mind with nature and principle is frequently asserted by Yi-ch'uan (YS, 225/11f, 14, 302/2, 323/5f, 352/10) and once by Ming-tao (YS, 154/4).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. YS, 222/6n. "Thought is to be classed with joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure."

<sup>5</sup> Mencius, L, 409/4f.

<sup>6</sup> Mencius, L, 409/3f.

<sup>7</sup> Ch'ao-shih k'o-yü, 14B/2f.

<sup>8</sup> YS, 207/5-13.

<sup>9</sup> YS, 49/1-6?, 55/13, 83/5?, 224/8-11. Ming-tao, 137/7, 139/13.

<sup>10</sup> Book of History, L, 61/6.

<sup>11</sup> Shang-ts'ai yü-lu, 1/2A/5, cf. 2/6A/10f.

<sup>12</sup> Hu-tzü chih-yen, yi yi 12A/5f. (Note the criticism by Chu Hsi which follows), cf. 1/4A/9, 7B/2, 2/8A/1, 3/6A/7.

Chu Hsi believed that this position was at one time held by Yi-ch'uan. (YL, 101/28B/11) His evidence is the correspondence between Yi-ch'uan and Lü Ta-lin over "equilibrium", in which Lü Ta-lin represents him as saying that "Whenever the mind is mentioned, it always refers to what is already emitted". (YCWC, 5/12A/4f) But the letter in which this is supposed to have been said does not survive, and in his reply Yi-ch'uan repudiates it (YCWC, 5/12A/8); it is not clear whether he has changed his mind or whether Lü Ta-lin misunderstood him.

The same view is expressed once in the *Yi-shu*, but in one of the two collections which Chu Hsi put at the end as least reliable:

"The endowment from heaven is called the nature; when stimulated it is regarded as passion, when moving as mind" (YS, 342/14).

<sup>13</sup> CTCS, 290/9.

<sup>14</sup> YL, 5/7B/7f, cf. 12A/12, *Hu-tzü chih yen*, yi yi 1A/8f.

<sup>15</sup> YL, 5/12A/1f, cf. 9B/7, 12A/2f.

<sup>16</sup> YL, 5/3B/12, 3B/11, 9A/2f, 14B/12.

## 6. CH'ENG (INTEGRITY), CHING (COMPOSURE)

In Yi-ch'uan's philosophy the original unity of the mind is called *ch'êng* 誠, while the process by which this unity is maintained in activity is called *ching* 敬. If the mind is principle, it is not easy to see how it can ever lose its unity; but this is only another sign that Yi-ch'uan did not succeed in reconciling his unusual view of the mind with his more conventional opinions.

*Ch'êng* is *ch'êng* 成 "accomplish, complete" written with the word radical. The traditional English equivalent is "sincerity"; but it seems preferable to translate it by "integrity", in spite of the misleading associations of the word with business ethics, and the lack of suitable adjectival and negative forms. To be *ch'êng* is to be an integral whole, all of one piece. According to the *Doctrine of the Mean*,<sup>1</sup> "Integrity is self-completion" (誠者自成也), on which Yi-ch'uan comments:

"'Integrity is self-completion'—Thus if you serve your parents with complete integrity, you are a complete son; if your ruler, you are a complete minister." (YS, 224/14)

Integrity is not conceived as a substance like the mind and nature, and the principles of which they consist; it is the state of man when all these are as they should be. We have more than once noticed the difficulty with which the Neo-Confucians distinguish substances from qualities and states, and quoted a case in which Chu Hsi deals with it by means of the terms "solid word" (representing a substance) and "void word".\* In connexion with integrity, Chu Hsi says:

"'Nature' is solid, 'integrity' is void. 'Nature' is a name for principle; 'integrity' is a name for an excellence. If you compare the nature to this fan, integrity may be compared to this fan being properly made."<sup>2</sup>

Yi-ch'uan explains integrity as meaning that the mind is one: "Making the mind one is what is meant by integrity." (CS, 6/9B/8f) "To make unity the ruling consideration is called composure; unity is called integrity." (YS, 346/1)

"Knowledge, benevolence, courage, these three, are the virtues

\* p.41

required of all under heaven. The means by which they are practised is being one.<sup>3</sup> To be one is integrity; it is simply to realize these three. Outside the three there is no other integrity." (YS, 19/12?)

He also defines it by one of the hexagrams of the *Book of Changes*, *Wu-wang* 無妄 ("No Irregularity"). *Wang* is licence, arbitrariness, irregularity—a course not in accordance with any principle. Heaven and earth are *wu-wang*, following principle without irregularity; man has integrity as long as he does the same. When one of the Ch'êngs was asked his opinion of two contemporary definitions, Li Ch'ing-ch'en's "not ceasing" and Hsü Chi's "not deceiving", he replied:

"'No Irregularity' is what is meant by integrity. 'Not deceiving' is secondary to this." (YS, 100/7?)

"Not deceiving" presumably refers to self-deception rather than deceiving others, being derived from a passage in the *Great Learning*:

"What is meant by 'giving integrity to one's intentions' is to be without self-deception."<sup>4</sup>

Commenting on the hexagram, Yi-ch'uan says:

"'No Irregularity' is perfect integrity. Perfect integrity is the way of heaven. When heaven transforms and nourishes the innumerable things, inexhaustibly producing and reproducing, that 'each has its correct nature and decree'<sup>5</sup> is No Irregularity. That man can unite himself with the way of No Irregularity is what is meant by 'unite his virtue with heaven and earth'.<sup>6</sup> . . . Even an action performed without vicious [motive], if it does not agree with correct principle, is irregular—which is to be vicious." (YC, 2/35A/13–35B/4)

How does one preserve this unity when the mind is active? In activity the mind tends to become confused, with unconnected thoughts getting in each other's way; its unity is maintained by attending to only one thing at a time and fully orientating oneself towards it, without being distracted by anything else. At all times the mind must have a "ruler" (*chu* 主), a ruling consideration to which everything is subordinated; and whatever the temporary ruler may be, the ultimate consideration must always be unity—"making unity the ruler" (*chu yi* 主一).

As a name for "making unity the ruling consideration" the Ch'êng brothers use the old word *ching*. *Ching* as it is used in the *Analects of Confucius*, for example, is the attitude one assumes towards parents, ruler, spirits; it includes both the emotion of reverence and a state of self-possession, attentiveness, concentration. It is generally translated

"respect" or "reverence", but it is the other aspect which is the more prominent even in some passages of the *Analects*, for example:

"In serving one's lord, be attentive to (*ching*) the duty rather than the salary."<sup>7</sup>

The attitude which is assumed towards the parents and the spirits, collected, concentrated, free from muddle and distraction, is for the Ch'êngs a proof that the unity of the mind can be maintained not only in contemplation, as Taoists and Buddhists suppose, but in action. It is the state of man when he is in full possession of himself—a state which in their opinion should be preserved at all times, although the ordinary man attains it only when he has to pull himself together for a special occasion. Thus *ching*, as the word is used by the Ch'êngs and their successors, cannot be translated by "reverence"; and Bruce's "seriousness" is utterly inadequate, although, as usual when this accusation can be made against Bruce, it is difficult to find a better alternative. The two aspects of *ching* are interdependent; to collect oneself, be attentive to a person or thing implies that one respects him or takes it seriously; and to be respectful implies that one is collected and attentive. But there is no English word which covers both, and the only course seems to be to use "reverence" for one and a different word for the other. In the translations which follow *ching* will be represented by "composure"—an equivalent for which no more is claimed than that it can be used consistently when it is the second aspect which is stressed, without distorting the sense as much as "reverence" or weakening it as much as "seriousness".

The aim of a Confucian is not to abstain from action and still the motions of the mind, but to orientate himself for moral action. In this connexion the Ch'êngs often appeal to the *Book of Changes*:

"The gentleman is composed, and thereby corrects himself within; he is moral, and thereby orders what is outside him."<sup>8</sup>

One of the Ch'êngs observes:

"The doctrine of the Buddhists includes inward correction by composure, but not ordering the external by morality." (YS, 80/8?)

Composure is revealed outwardly by the measured sedateness in expression, speech and deportment of the true Confucian gentleman:

"Expressed outwardly, it is called sedateness (*kung* 恭); possessed within, it is called composure." (YS, 100/5?)

"Composure is a matter of controlling oneself, sedateness of contact with others." (YS, 205/8)

Until we are composed, thought is confused and disorderly:

"Q. How is composure attained in practice?

"A. The best way is to make unity the ruling consideration.

"Q. I have been troubled by unsettled thoughts. Sometimes before I have finished thinking of one matter others occur to me, entangled like hemp fibres. What is to be done?

"A. This must be avoided; it is the source of 'disintegration' ('not *ch'eng*'). You must practice; it will be all right when by practice you have become capable of concentration. In all, whether thought or action, you must seek unity." (YS, 223/9-11)

"Formerly Lü Ta-lin questioned me about the disorder of his thoughts.<sup>9</sup> I replied that it was due only to his mind having no ruler; if it were given a ruler by composure, it would naturally be free from disorder—just as if a jug of water is thrown into water, even the water of the river or the lake cannot enter, because it is solid inside.

"Q. If the thoughts are actually correct [although confused], I suppose there is no harm?

"A. It is right to make reverence [also *ching*] the ruling consideration in a shrine, for example, or gravity in court, or sternness in the army. But if they appear on the wrong occasions, confused and out of order, they are vicious even if they are correct [in themselves]."

(YS, 212/3-5)

Yin T'un<sup>10</sup>, a disciple of Yi-ch'uan, says:

"To be collected, body and mind, is all that is meant by 'making unity the ruler'. Thus when a man enters a shrine to show his reverence (*ehing*) his mind is collected, and cannot be applied to another matter however small; what is this but 'making unity the ruler'?"<sup>11</sup>

If the mind is concentrated on one object, its "ruler", no distracting thought can enter, just as no more water can get into a jug which is already full. "If there is a ruler inside, it is solid; if it is solid, nothing can enter from outside to distress you."<sup>11</sup> Although the Ch'êngs are fond of this image of a jug, it happens to conflict with their habit of describing the mind in its proper state as "void", responding to outside things without retaining traces of them. These two ways of speaking are given a rather forced reconciliation, which incidentally directly contradicts the preceding quotation:

"The learner's first task is of course to decide on his goal. But if someone says that he wishes to exclude seeing and hearing, knowing and thinking, this is Lao-tzû's 'getting rid of the sages and abandoning

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

wisdom'; if he wishes to exclude thoughts, being distressed by their confusion, he will have to 'practise Zen and enter into samādhi' with the Buddhists. Take the mirror as a parallel; it is inevitable that the innumerable things should all be reflected in it, how can one prevent the mirror from reflecting? The human mind is bound to interact with the innumerable things; how can one prevent it from thinking about them? If you wish to avoid confusion of thought, the only course is for the mind to have a 'ruler'. How does one give it a ruler? Simply by composure. If there is a ruler it is void—by void I mean that depravity cannot enter. Without a ruler it is solid—that is, things have come to usurp a place within it. Now if a jar is solid inside with water, even if the river and the sea flood it they can find no space to enter; is it not void? If there is no water inside, you can pour in as much as you like; is it not solid? In general the human mind cannot be put to two uses at once. If it is applied to one matter, others cannot enter it; this is because the matter has become its ruler. Merely by making some matter its ruler, you can avoid being distressed by confused thoughts; and if you can give it a ruler by composure, you will always be free from such distress. What is meant by composure is making unity the ruler; and what is meant by unity is to be without distraction."

(YS, 186/7-12)

The connexion between composure and integrity is shown in the following passages:

"Making unity the ruling consideration is called composure; unity is called integrity. Making it the ruling consideration implies that there are intentions." (That is, that there is activity; integrity belongs only to the substance.) (YS, 346/1)

"'If you guard against depravity, integrity is preserved of itself';<sup>12</sup> it is not that integrity is something we preserve by pulling it in from outside. The men of today, enslaved to the evil outside them, seek among the evil for something good to preserve; this being so, how is it possible for them to [literally, 'how is there a principle that they'] enter into good? If they merely guarded against depravity, integrity would be preserved of itself. Therefore Mencius says that the nature is good, meaning that all [good] comes from within. Once you recognize that integrity is preserved within, you will not have to labour to guard against depravity. If you merely control your countenance and regulate your thoughts, composure will come spontaneously. Composure is simply making unity the ruler. If unity is made the ruling

consideration, [the mind] goes neither East nor West and thus remains in equilibrium; it goes neither this way nor that way and thus remains within. If you preserve this, heaven's principle will spontaneously become plain. The learner must cultivate himself according to this idea by 'being composed and thereby correcting himself within'. The basic point is to correct oneself within." (YS, 165/8-11)

"If you guard against depravity, of course there will be unity. But if you make unity the ruling consideration, there will be no need to speak of guarding against depravity. What are we to say to those who find it difficult to recognize unity and do not know how to work for it? If you are orderly and dignified the mind will be one; that is all that is meant by unity. If it is one, it will of itself be innocent of vices. If you cultivate yourself according to this idea, eventually heaven's principle will of itself become plain." (YS, 167/4f)

"Composure is the way to guard against depravity. 'Guarding against depravity, he preserves his integrity.'<sup>12</sup> Although guarding against depravity and preserving integrity are two different matters, in another sense they are the same. If you guard against depravity, integrity is preserved of itself." (YS, 206/3)

"After there is integrity one is capable of composure. On the other hand, when one has not yet attained integrity, it is only by composure that one becomes capable of it." (YS, 100/6?)

Thus integrity is the primal unity of the mind, the substance; composure is the means by which it is maintained in activity, the function:

"Integrity is the whole substance, composure the function."

(WS, 2/3B/10?)

"Integrity is the way of heaven, composure is the basis of human action. [Note by the disciple Liu Hsüan: 'Composure is the function'.] When there is composure there is integrity." (YS, 139/11, Ming-tao)

Translating *ch'êng* as "integrity", it would not be altogether misleading to think of *ching* as "integration", although this might suggest the formation of new wholes, while *ching* merely preserves the original wholeness of the mind.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 418/4.

<sup>2</sup> YL, 6/4A/10f.

<sup>3</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 407/3f.

<sup>4</sup> *Great Learning*, L, 366/7.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

<sup>8</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 3/5.

<sup>9</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 12/9.

<sup>10</sup> *Analects*, L, 305/3.

<sup>11</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 20/5.

<sup>12</sup> YS, 9/3-5?

<sup>13</sup> *Yin Ho-ching chi*, 16/14f.

<sup>14</sup> YS, 9/5?. A saying of Yi-ch'u'an (see YS, 212/3).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Changes*, Sung, 7/2.

## 7. KÊ-WU (THE INVESTIGATION OF THINGS)

According to a passage in the *Great Learning*,

"The men of old who wished to make bright virtue plain to the world first put their countries in order, for which they had first to regulate their families, and for that to improve themselves as individuals, and for that to correct their hearts, and for that to give integrity to their intentions, and for that to extend their knowledge. The extension of knowledge lies in the investigation of things (*kê-wu* 格物)."<sup>1</sup>

It is unfortunate that while all the other stages are clear enough, the last of all, on which so much ultimately depends, has been a subject of dispute among commentators. *Kê* can mean "to correct", "to arrive at" or "to oppose". Among the contemporaries of the Ch'êngs, Ssü-ma Kuang took it in the third sense, "to guard against things", that is, against having one's desires excited by them.<sup>2</sup> According to Yi-ch'u'an, the phrase means "to arrive at things" (more exactly, to arrive at the principles inside them). The most convenient English translation of *kê-wu*, when understood in this way, is Legge's "investigation of things".

"The extension of knowledge lies in *kê-wu*.' *Kê* means 'arrive at'. *Wu* means 'activities'. In all activities there are principles; to arrive at their principles is *kê-wu*." (WS, 2/4A/9)

The Ch'êngs connect this passage with another from the *Explanations of the Diagrams*, one of the appendices of the *Book of Changes*:

"They [the sages] exhausted the principles, fulfilled the nature, and thereby attained to the decree."<sup>3</sup>

Shao Yung and Chang Tsai had assumed that this describes three successive stages in the work of the sage.<sup>4</sup> But according to the Ch'êngs principle, nature and the decree are ultimately the same. When I perceive a principle in an external situation I also become aware of its presence in my own nature, and at the same time ensure that whatever happens to me because I follow it in practice is my "true decree". Ming-tao says:

"The three activities are simultaneous; there is absolutely no

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

interval between them. 'Exhausting the principles' is not to be taken merely as a matter of knowledge. If you can really exhaust the principles, nature and the decree are also disposed of." (YS, 15/11)

The significance of these passages for Yi-ch'uan is that the government of state, family and individual depend ultimately on the individual's insight into principle. How does he attain this insight? The principles in outside things are also in his nature, so that he may look either outwards or inwards to find them. He may come to understand the principles of compassion and filial piety by examining the relationship between father and son; but as long as he retains his integrity he will also be able to see them by introspection. According to the *Doctrine of the Mean*,

"Understanding due to integrity is called nature. From understanding arriving at integrity is called education."<sup>5</sup>

Yi-ch'uan comments:

"To learn them from what is outside, and grasp them within, is called 'understanding'. To grasp them from what is within, and connect them with outside things, is called 'integrity'. Integrity and understanding are one." (YS, 348/10)

Yi-ch'uan, followed by Chu Hsi and his school, lays stress on the objective approach, while Ming-tao, anticipating Lu Chiu-yüan (1139–1192) and Wang Shou-jén (1472–1528), prefers the subjective. But the two points of view are of course not incompatible, and the difference, which was to become the great controversial issue in Neo-Confucianism for the next five hundred years, is only a difference of emphasis in the Ch'éng brothers.

"Q. Does 'investigation of things' refer to outside things or to things inside the nature?

"A. It makes no difference. Whatever is before the eye is a 'thing', and things all have principles, for example that by which fire is hot and that by which water is cold. As for the relations between ruler and minister, father and son, all are principles." (YS, 271/1f)

Once Yi-ch'uan even goes so far as to say that:

"The best way to investigate the principles of things is to seek them in oneself, where it is most to the point to find them." (YS, 194/6)

But it is the other approach which is the more congenial to Yi-ch'uan's objective cast of mind. For him, moral development depends on learning principles from outside sources (primarily the Confucian classics) and learning to recognize them in external situations. As

soon as we perceive them in external things we become aware of them inside us, so that it is by looking outwards that we "fulfil the nature". Yi-ch'uan was no doubt prejudiced against the introspective method by the fact that so many people who looked into their own natures imagined that they found the doctrines of Buddhism and Taoism. Admittedly the nature is good; but introspection is hindered by the fact that it is obscured from birth by the impurity of our ether. Whereas animals and birds know how to build nests and rear their young without being taught, man has lost all innate knowledge except how to feed at the breast.<sup>6</sup> Consequently it is by looking outwards that we achieve integrity within. Introducing his four admonitions on looking, listening, speaking, and moving, Yi-ch'uan says:

"These four are the functions of the body. They originate within and respond outside; control over the external is the means to cultivate the internal."

His admonition on looking is:

"The mind is at bottom void [*hsü*, rarefied, not solid, like water], responding to things without retaining a trace of them. To hold on to it, it is necessary to find standards for it by looking at things. When it meets temptations before it, it is displaced within. Control them outside in order to secure yourself within. If you conquer yourself and return to propriety, eventually you will have integrity."

(YCWC, 4/4A/12, 4B/1-3)

"Q. Of the means of cultivating oneself, which comes first?

"A. There is nothing prior to 'correcting the heart' and 'giving integrity to the intentions'. Integrity of intention lies in the extension of knowledge, and 'the extension of knowledge lies in the investigation (*kē*) of things'. *Kē* means 'arrive at', as in the phrase *tsu-k'ao lai kē* (祖考來格 'the ancestors arrive'). In general there is one principle in each thing; it is necessary to comprehend its principle exhaustively. There are many ways of exhausting the principles—the study of books, and explanation of the moral principles in them; discussion of prominent figures, past and present, to distinguish what is right and wrong in their actions; experience of practical affairs and of dealing with them appropriately. All are ways of exhausting the principles.

"Q. Is it necessary to investigate one thing after another, or can all the innumerable principles be known by the investigation of a single thing?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

"A. In the latter case, how could they be interrelated? Even Yen-tzü [a disciple of Confucius who understood a subject as soon as he had been told one part in ten] could not be expected to understand all principles by investigating one thing. Only if you investigate one thing after another day after day, after long practice the [principles] will break loose and reveal themselves in their interrelations."

(YS, 209/7-10)

•  
"Q. In examining things and searching the self, should one look back into oneself to seek what one has already seen in things?

"A. There is no need to put it in that way. There is a single principle in things and in me; as soon as 'that' is understood, 'this' becomes clear. This is the way to unite external and internal. The scholar should understand everything, at one extreme the height of heaven and thickness of earth, at the other why a single thing is as it is.

"Q. In extending knowledge, what do you say to first seeking the principles in the 'four beginnings'?

"A. To seek them in the nature and the passions is certainly the most direct course; but a single grass and a single tree both have principles which must be investigated." (YS, 214/1-3)

"In labouring to exhaust the principles, we are not expected to make an exhaustive research into the principles of everything in the world, nor to succeed after exhausting a single principle. It is only necessary to accumulate a large number of them, and then they will become visible spontaneously." (YS, 45/6?)

"Q. When Chang Hsü [a poet and calligrapher of the eighth century] was studying grass script, he awoke to a new style of calligraphy after seeing a porter getting in the way of a princess, and the sword-play of Kung-sun Ta-niang. Was it not that he had been constantly thinking about the subject, and at this point his mind reacted?

"A. Yes. Awakening comes only after thought; without thought, how could such a thing happen?" Yi-ch'uan, always a moralist, characteristically adds: "But it is a pity that Chang Hsü was only interested in calligraphy. If he had given the same attention to the Way, nothing would have been beyond his powers." (YS, 207/10f)

"In investigating things to exhaust their principles, the idea is not that one must exhaust completely everything in the world. If they are exhausted in only one matter, in the rest one can infer by analogy. Taking filial piety as an example, what is the reason why behaviour is

considered filial? If you cannot exhaust the principle in one matter, do so in another, whether you deal with an easy or a difficult example first depending on the depth of your knowledge. Just so there are innumerable paths by which you can get to the capital, and it is enough to find one of them. The reason why they can be exhausted is simply that there is one principle in all the innumerable things, and even a single thing or activity, however small, has this principle."

(YS, 174/2-4)<sup>7</sup>

" '(The goal of) thought is called insight.'<sup>8</sup> After long thought, insight comes spontaneously. If you think about one matter without success, think about another instead. It is a mistake to concentrate solely on the one matter; for if a man's knowledge is obstructed at one point, the most intense thought will not penetrate." (YS, 207/12f)

Thus the investigation of a thing consists of thinking followed by a sudden insight into its principle. This insight reminds one a little of the "satori", the sudden and permanent mystical illumination of Zen Buddhism; but it is really quite different, a purely intellectual illumination in which a previously meaningless fact, as we say, "falls into place"—in Yi-ch'uan's words, "wherever there is a principle East is East and West is West".<sup>9</sup> Of the thinking which precedes it, the only kind which is specified is inference from principles already known.<sup>10</sup> The main terms for intellectual processes used by Yi-ch'uan may be explained in relation to principle as follows:

*Li*, principle. Literally "vein, line"—the line running through a thing or activity.

**推** *T'ui*, to infer. Literally "push, extend".

*T'ui-li*, to extend, infer from a principle—to extend the line until it runs through a new thing.

**貫** *Kuan*, to relate. Literally "thread together" (coins on a string)—unite things by the line running through them:

"If you have their principles correct, the innumerable activites are one—to unite and thereby relate them."<sup>11</sup> (WS, 2/4B/2)

**貫通** *Kuan-t'ung*, to interrelate, understand in their interrelations. Literally "threading together to go through"—go along the line which threads things together (also 該通 *kai-t'ung*, "putting together go through").

"Whenever men hear a saying or hear of an affair, and their knowledge is still confined to the one saying or affair, it is simply because they cannot interrelate." (WS, 3/2B/1f?)

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

*T'u-i-li*, inference from principle, corresponds more or less to the deduction of Western logic.\* On the other hand, Yi-ch'uan's frequent references to examining more than one example before awakening to a principle do not imply what we call induction. A principle can be seen in a single case, even if the poor quality of one's ether makes it necessary to examine many before awakening to it; and there is no indication that the number of cases affects the probability that it is valid. However, the kind of reasoning which Yi-ch'uan describes is no doubt psychologically connected with the way we reason inductively. In practice, of course, we seldom collect examples blindly and then make a generalization from them; it is more usual to awaken suddenly to a principle in a single case because a number of similar cases have left subconscious traces in the past, and then proceed to collect examples to test it. Yi-ch'uan recognizes the first stage in this process but not the second; for him a principle once seen does not need to be verified. The Neo-Confucian Investigation of Things has often been regarded as an anticipation of the scientific method which unfortunately failed to mature. It is true that the Investigation of Things includes a certain amount of speculation on natural phenomena by way of relaxation from the more serious business of investigating the exercise of benevolence, duty, propriety and wisdom:

"A single tree and a single grass both have principles which must be investigated." (YS, 214/3)

"A wide acquaintance with the names of birds, animals, grasses and trees"<sup>12</sup> is a means of understanding principle." (YS, 355/3)

Chu Hsi, among less successful speculations, was capable of arguing that the resemblance of mountains to waves shows that the earth was once in a fluid state and has since solidified, and that the presence of fossil shell-fish on mountains is proof that they were once under water.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the whole purpose of the Investigation of Things is moral self-development; the principles which really matter are moral principles, and investigation is mainly concerned with uncovering them in human affairs. There is no idea of adding to a common stock of knowledge; the object of investigation is to discover how to live, a discovery which has already been made once and for all by the sages, and which each individual must make over again for himself. This is not, it should be added, simply a matter of reading the classics. Moral principles are learnt in the first place from the

\* pp.9-11

*Analects* of Confucius and *Mencius*, but the important thing is to learn to see them in concrete examples, beginning with the events in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the chronicle of the state of Lu traditionally supposed to have been written by Confucius.<sup>14</sup>

"Whenever reading history, it is necessary, not merely to remember the facts, but also to become aware of the principles of good government and disorder, security and danger, rise and fall, survival and destruction. Thus when you study the one reign of Kao Ti, you must be able to anticipate the four hundred years of the house of Han, its end and its beginning, good government and disorder." (YS, 255/7f)

Yi-ch'uan's philosophy is of the kind which implies that to know good is to do good, and is therefore under the necessity of explaining how "true knowledge" differs from the kind we so often fail to act on in practice:

"There is a difference between true knowledge and everyday knowledge. I once saw a peasant who had been wounded by a tiger. When someone said that a tiger was attacking people, everyone was startled; but the peasant reacted differently from the rest. Even a child knows that tigers are dangerous, but it is not true knowledge; it is only true knowledge if it is like the peasant's. So when men know evil but still do it, this also is not true knowledge; if it were, decidedly they would not do it." (YS, 16/2-4?)

All principles are in the nature, but many are hidden from us by the impurity of our ether. As long as a principle cannot be seen by introspection, we can have only an "everyday knowledge" of it from external sources, and to follow it involves conscious effort. But as soon as it is "grasped" (*té A 得*) inwardly, it is followed with pleasure and without effort—"true knowledge". It is then a *té B 德*, an inward force; the word, which was assumed to be derived from *té A*, is generally translated "virtue".

"Whoever grasps the real principles in his mind stands out from others. Those who merely repeat what they hear do not really see them with the mind; if they did see, they certainly would not be satisfied with themselves when they have no reason to be satisfied. Every individual has something which he definitely will not do, although in other matters he may be less scrupulous. Thus a scholar would rather die than commit a burglary, although he may be dishonest in other ways. Literate people can all talk about what is proper and what is right; princes, dukes and high officials are all familiar with

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG YI-CH'UAN

such external things as what carriage or cap is required for the occasion, but in anything that touches their interests prefer wealth and rank to moral principle. All this results merely from being able to speak about what one has not really seen. When it comes to such an act as stepping in water or fire, everyone avoids it, for they really see why they should; one will stand out naturally from others only when one has a mind which sees evil as like dipping the hand in hot water."

—After repeating the story about the tiger, Yi-ch'uan continues: "This is real insight. To grasp (*té A*) [a principle] in the mind means to have a virtue (*té B*). It does not require effort; but one who is still learning does need to exert effort." (YS, 163/9-164/1)

"There is a difference between acting after grasping [a principle] and acting after thought. If you have grasped it in yourself, the action will be as simple as using your hand to lift a thing; but if you have to think, it is not yet within yourself, and action is like holding one thing in your hand to take another." (YS, 22/6?)

"Q. Should not the extension of knowledge be combined with earnestness in conduct?

"A. As far as the ordinary man is concerned, it requires effort to apply the knowledge that he should do nothing improper, but not the knowledge that he should not commit a burglary. This is because knowledge may be deep or superficial. The men of old defined a gentleman as one who takes pleasure in following principle. If you have to exert effort, you only know that you should follow principle, and do not take pleasure in it. As soon as you begin to take pleasure in it, to follow principle is pleasant and not to is unpleasant. What is to prevent you from following principle? Naturally there is no need for effort." (YS, 207/6-9)

"To know something implies that it is outside me and known to me. To like it implies that although I am sincere I still cannot possess it. But when I arrive at taking pleasure in it, it has become my own possession." (WS, 2/2A/2)

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Great Learning*, L, 357/5-358/9.

<sup>2</sup> *Wén-kuo wén-chéng Ssu-ma Kuang wén-chi*, 71/10A-11A.

<sup>3</sup> Sung, 338/5f.

<sup>4</sup> *Huang-chi ching-shih*, 12B/8A, CTCS, 256/1-8. A discussion between Chang Tsai and the Ch'êngs on this point is recorded in YS, 126/11-14, cf. 28/1f.

<sup>5</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 414/10-415/1.

<sup>6</sup> YS, 59/6-8?, 280/11.

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

<sup>7</sup> The opinion that all principles can be understood by investigating only one thing, contradicted in YS, 209/7-10, 45/6<sup>2</sup>, was evidently soon abandoned by Yi-ch'uan. This passage is from ch.15, which Chu Hsi regarded as the earliest collection of his sayings (see the table of contents of the *Yi shu*).

<sup>8</sup> *Book of History*, L, 327/1f.

<sup>9</sup> YS, 323/3.

<sup>10</sup> Another early Neo-Confucian description of reasoning is "combining and distinguishing". Cf. Hu Hung:

"What is visible to the eye, birds and animals can all see . . . But it is only man who, seeing the innumerable forms and hearing the innumerable sounds, combines and distinguishes them" (*Hu-tzü chih yen*, 2/6A/8-6B/1).

<sup>11</sup> *Analects*, L, 169/9.

<sup>12</sup> *Analects*, L, 323/4f. Cf. Yang Shih:

"The men of old had 'a wide acquaintance with the names of birds, animals, grasses and trees'. How could it only be their names with which they were acquainted? They deeply investigated and earnestly sought them; all are included in the Investigation of Things" (*Yang Kuei-shan chi* 66/2f).

<sup>13</sup> YL, 1/6A/8-10, 94/3A/12-3B/2, 4B/5-8.

<sup>14</sup> YS, 181/8-12.

## 8. CRITICISM OF BUDDHISM

Before the Sung, Confucianism had no systematic philosophy capable of competing with that which Buddhism brought with it from India. The object of the Ch'êngs was to create such a system—or rather, putting it in their own terms, to recover it from the classics, where it had lain neglected and misunderstood since the death of Mencius. In their eyes Buddhism is the most pernicious of false doctrines, a heresy which is undermining society and cannot even be studied objectively without the danger of contamination. One of the Ch'êngs says in an address to his disciples:

"This doctrine has already become a fashion throughout the Empire; how can the situation be remedied? Buddhism already existed in ancient times, but even when it was most prosperous it only preached image-worship, and the harm it did was very slight. But its present tendency is to speak first of all of the nature and the decree, the Way and the Virtue, to pursue first of all the intelligent; and it is those with the loftiest talents who sink most deeply into it. As for me. I am a person of mediocre talent and virtue, and am incapable of dealing with it; but as things are going today, even if there were several men each as great as Mencius, they would be helpless. Consider the time of Mencius; the harm done by Yang Chu and Mo-tzû did not amount to much, and compared with the situation today it was negligible. And of course this matter is connected with the failure or success of the state. When the "pure talkers" flourished the Chin dynasty decayed; but the harm done by them was limited to idle talk, and was in no way comparable with the present injury to the Way. Even when a friend sinks into this doctrine one cannot turn him back; now my only hope is in you gentlemen. You must simply put it aside without discussing it; do not say 'We must see what it is like', for if you see what it is like you will yourselves be changed into Buddhists. The essential thing is decisively to reject its arts." (YS, 24/1-6?)

The modern reader is bound to regard the confidence of the Ch'êngs in the purity of their Confucianism with a certain irony. We can see clearly that they retain many of the ideas which Confucianism

had so fully assimilated during the last thousand years that their Buddhist origin had been forgotten, and they were read back into the classics. Nevertheless the Ch'êngs were not in any way deceiving themselves when they claimed to be enemies of Buddhism. Confucianism accepted the visible world and the social obligations of living in it, Buddhism sought individual salvation by renunciation of the world; this fundamental opposition had never been obscured by the long intertraffic in ideas, and the Neo-Confucians accepted the former viewpoint as whole-heartedly as Confucius himself. The difference is expressed very clearly by Hu Yin, a disciple of the Ch'êng disciple Yang Shih:

"Man is a living thing; the Buddhists speak not of life but of death. Human affairs are all visible; the Buddhists speak not of the manifest but of the hidden. After a man dies he is called a ghost; the Buddhists speak not of men but of ghosts. What man cannot avoid is the ordinary Way; the Buddhists speak not of the ordinary but of the marvellous. That by which the ordinary Way is as it is (*so-yi jan*) is principle; the Buddhists speak not of principle but of illusion. It is to what follows birth and precedes death that we should devote our minds; the Buddhists speak not of this life but of past and future lives. Seeing and hearing, thought and discussion, are real evidence; the Buddhists do not treat them as real, but speak of what the ear and eye cannot attain, though sight and discussion cannot reach."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the Neo-Confucian assumption that underlying the multiplicity of phenomena there is a single reality which is present in man as his nature is derived from Buddhism, and that its original object had been to justify the insights of the mystic. Imported by the Buddhists from India into China, which had no developed metaphysic, this framework of thought had by the Sung come to seem natural even to Confucians; but they used it to serve their own quite different ends. According to the Ch'êngs the nature consists of the social virtues benevolence, duty, propriety and wisdom, and is fulfilled by acting as a worthy member of society. The nature is obscured by the impurity of the ether; but this means, not that we must release it from the ether by a meditative technique, but that we must refine the ether by acquiring the habit of behaving morally. The world below the level of form is not illusion; on the contrary it is only within it that we can see principles and act in accordance with them. Nor is life a web of suffering from which it is necessary to escape; joy

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG TI-CH'UAN

and suffering alternate with the Yang and Yin, each necessary to the other.

The criticisms made by the Ch'êngs are based on morality and common-sense rather than on logic. Indeed—the first passage quoted is a good illustration—an exasperated sense of intellectual inferiority is perceptible in their attitude to the Buddhists, whose sophistries it is so difficult for the practical-minded Confucian to answer. They have a profound antipathy to everything for which Buddhism stands, to any suggestion that it is either possible or desirable to escape from the world perceived by the senses. Their fundamental objection is that the ultimate motive of the Buddhist is selfish. The sage follows principle which is "thus of itself", independent of human desire; the Buddhist is only concerned to extricate himself from the miseries of life. Like most Confucians, the Ch'êngs do not sympathize with extremes of optimism and pessimism; life is neither all joy nor all misery but a cycle in which the two alternate and are mutually dependent, and the desire to escape from a world in which you cannot have the former without the latter is at bottom selfish.

"As for the doctrine of the Buddhists, one cannot say they are ignorant, indeed they are extremely lofty and profound; but the point is that finally it all comes down to selfishness and self-interest. Why do I say this? Within heaven and earth, where there is birth there will be death, where there is joy there will be sorrow. In the claims of the Buddhists one must recognize an element of cunning and deception; to speak of avoiding death and life, of smoothing the vexations of the world, finally derives from selfishness." (YS, 168/10f)

"Buddhism simply intimidates people with its doctrine of 'life and death' (*samsara*). It is strange that for two thousand years not a single person has noticed this—which shows how people have been intimidated by them. The sages and worthies regarded life and death as our lot, which there is no reason to fear, and so they did not discuss death and life; while the Buddhists, because they are afraid of death and life, never stop talking about them. The lowest class of man of course has many fears, and is easily moved by self-interest. As for the Zen school, although they claim to be different, in essentials their viewpoint is the same—it all comes to self-interest.

"Q. Can you tell me whether the doctrine was originally sought out in a disinterested spirit, and this delusion arose later, or whether the original motive for its invention was only self-interest?

"A. It was originally invented out of self-interest, and hence it is out of self-interest that those who study it believe in it. The saying of Chuang-tzū [a Taoist of the fourth century B.C.] 'Do not be afraid of transformation [death]' also expresses the point I am making.<sup>2</sup> The harm done by Yang Chu and Mo-tzū has already disappeared from the world, while the harm done by Taoism is in the last resort slight. Nowadays there is only Buddhism, which is discussed by everyone, which spreads everywhere; the harm it does is infinite."

(YS, 3/9-13?)

Besides being selfish, the wish to escape from the world implies an unrealistic refusal to accept the conditions of existence:

"The Zen doctrine of leaving the world is like closing one's eyes and not seeing one's nose; the nose is there of itself." (YS, 69/4)

"Buddhism has the doctrine that one should leave the family and the world. One cannot really leave [i.e. cease to belong to] the family; but of course it is possible for them to run away from it by not treating their parents as parents. As for the world, how can one leave it? To leave the world can only mean no longer having the sky above you and the earth below you. None the less they drink when they are thirsty and eat when they are hungry, have the sky above them and the earth below." (YS, 216/8f)

The world perceived by the senses and the society towards which we have moral obligations cannot be escaped, and neither can the passions with which we respond to stimulation from outside:

"Man is a living thing; how can he become withered wood and dead ash? Since he is alive, he must have action and have thought; it is only by death that you can become withered wood and dead ash."

(YS, 27/1f?)

"As for what they say about the 'net of the world'—simply because they have some moral sense which they cannot abolish, all that comes within the scope of loyalty and filial piety, benevolence and duty, is treated as an unwelcome necessity; but they would like to eliminate, step by step, even what remains of moral sense, thinking that only then will they have arrived at the Way. However, in the last resort they cannot eliminate it.

"As for man's senses, when there is the ether of something there must be the knowledge of it. What we see is colour, what we hear is sound, what we taste is flavour. That man has joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure is also inherent in his nature. Now they make the unnatural

claim that it is necessary to cut off all these in order to grasp heaven's truth—which is what is called destroying heaven's truth."

(YS, 24/12-25/1?)

The Buddhist does not see that he cannot develop himself inwardly without learning to act morally; he concerns himself with what is internal and "above form" in isolation from what is external and "below form". He knows how to "correct himself within by composure", but not how to "order the external by morality":\*

"At bottom the Buddhists, being afraid of death, are motivated by self-interest; how can they be disinterested? When they strive only to 'understand the high' without 'studying the low',<sup>3</sup> how can their understanding of the high be right? The high understood only in isolation, completely out of connexion with the low, is not the Way. Mencius said: 'To exhaust all that is in one's mind is to know one's nature',<sup>4</sup> which is what they mean by 'knowing the mind and seeing the nature'. But they know nothing of his point about 'preserving the mind and nourishing the nature' [by moral action]. They speak of course of 'solitary goodness outside the family', which in itself is proof that they have insufficient knowledge of what the Way really is [since for Confucians one's major duties are towards one's own family].

"Q. Such Buddhist doctrines as that of hell were all established for the sake of the lowest class of people, to frighten them into doing good.

"A. Perfect integrity interpenetrates heaven and earth, but there are still men who are not changed [that is, there are men who are not reformed even by the all-pervading moral influence of the sage]; how can they be changed by setting up a false doctrine?"

(YS, 153/11-154/3, Ming-tao)

The Ch'êngs do not deny that the spiritual training of the Buddhists has a certain value, but consider it one-sided:

"Their learning may be compared to peering at the sky through a tube; one cannot deny that they see the sky, but their range of vision is confined." (YS, 318/13)

This simile of Chuang-tzû's is a favourite of the Ch'êngs; it implies not only that the Buddhists view is limited rather than mistaken, but also that it overlooks the real world by aiming exclusively at the transcendental:

"The doctrine of the Buddhists may be compared to peering at the

\* p.69

sky through a tube. Concerned solely with what is right overhead they see only in one direction without seeing what is around them. Therefore they are all incapable of managing practical affairs. The way of the sage is like standing in the middle of a level plain, so that nothing around him is overlooked." (YS, 153/9f, Ming-tao)

The Ch'êngs are especially hostile to any suggestion that the idea (*hsin 心*, "mind") of Buddhism may be right although its practice (*chi 跡*, "tracks") is wrong. Theory and practice are one; a statement ascribed to Wang T'ung (583-616) which implies that they can be separated is more than once singled out for criticism.<sup>5</sup> In practice the Buddhist denies his obligations to family and Emperor, and the Ch'êngs (unjustly but inevitably from the Confucian point of view) regard this as equivalent to renouncing all morality. Since the practice is wrong, the idea must also be wrong, and there is no need to expose oneself to the danger of conversion by studying it.

"If you wish to make a complete investigation of Buddhist doctrines sorting out the good from the bad, before you have finished you will certainly have changed into a Buddhist. Only judge them by their practice; their practical teaching being what it is, what can their idea be worth? Certainly one can hardly take their idea without their practice; practice follows directly from ideas, and the distinction between them made by Wang T'ung is erroneous. The best course is to decide where they disagree with the sages in practice. When what they say agrees with the sages, it is of course already part of our doctrine; where it disagrees, of course it should be rejected. This is the simplest method of deciding the matter." (YS, 172/10-12)

The Buddhist believes that the Way can only be followed by detaching oneself from outside things. He does not see that the Way is present in all things and activities; the principle of a thing cannot be separated from the thing itself, and the principle of an action can only be followed by performing the action. To reject outside things is to reject the principles within them and therefore to imply that there is division within the Way:

"Outside the Way there are no things, and outside things there is no Way, so that within heaven and earth no matter where one goes there is the Way. In the relation between father and son, being a [true] father or son depends on [literally 'is in'] affection; in the relation between ruler and minister, being a [true] ruler or minister depends on majesty [*i.e.* a thing is truly itself only when it follows the Way].

As for being husband and wife, senior and junior, friend and friend, there is nothing one does which is not the Way. This is why 'one may not part from the Way for a moment'.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, to break with human relations and get rid of the 'four elements' [the Buddhist elements earth, water, fire and wind] is to diverge very far from the Way. Therefore 'the attitude to the world of the gentleman is to be neither for anything nor against anything; it is duty that he follows'.<sup>7</sup> If you are for or against anything, you imply that there is division within the Way, and deny the completeness of heaven and earth. Buddhism includes 'composure by which to correct the internal' but not 'morality by which to order the external'. So the bigoted become like withered trees and the lax give themselves up to license. This is what makes Buddhism narrow. Our way is different—nothing but following the nature. This principle the sages have completely expressed in the *Changes*.<sup>8</sup> (YS, 80/5-9?, ascribed by Chu Hsi to Ming-tao)<sup>9</sup>

"Idea and practice are one; how can the idea ever be right when the practice is wrong? It is as though, when your two legs are walking, you were to say of your idea: 'I don't really want to walk; those two legs of mine are walking by themselves'. Is this not impossible? [literally 'How should there be this principle?'] For above and below, root and tip, inside and outside, are all one principle, which is the Way. Chuang-tzü speaks of 'wandering within the bounds, wandering outside the bounds'.<sup>10</sup> How can there be any such distinction? It would imply a split within the Way, so that the inside is one place and the outside another, which is impossible.

"Students of Zen say: 'The life of plants, trees, birds and beasts is all illusion'. I say: You consider it illusion because it is born and grows in spring and summer, and decays when autumn and winter come; and you conclude that the life of man is also illusion. Why not give this answer: that things are born and die, are completed and decay, is a principle which exists of itself; how can they be considered illusion?" (YS, 4/2-6?)

The Buddhist rejects the reality of the external world, thus implying a division between external principles and those in the self. His main argument is that the impermanence of things shows that they are illusory. But although men and plants are impermanent, the principle that men are born and die, that plants flower and fade, is permanent and therefore real. The Ch'êngs do not seem to have fully realized

that this argument proves the reality only of principles, not of plants, animals and men. One reason for this is that the word *ch'ang 常*, which for the Buddhist means "permanent", is more often used by Confucians in the sense of "regular, normal", and can therefore be applied to the impermanent thing which follows the permanent principle. In the following passages it will be necessary, at the cost of exposing this flaw, to translate *ch'ang* sometimes as "permanence" and sometimes as "regularity":

"That which has life must have death, that which has a beginning must have an end; it is this that makes for *regularity*. The Buddhists regard completion and decay as [proof of] *impermanence*, being ignorant that it is *impermanence* that makes for *regularity*. That a hundred years is the term of man's life is *regularity*; that a man should happen to outlive a hundred is not what is called *regularity*."

(WS, 7/2B/1-3?)

"That a tree flowers in spring and fades in autumn is a *permanent* principle. As for *permanent* flowering, there is no such principle; on the contrary, it would be delusion. Now the Buddhist regards death as [proof of] *impermanence*. If there is death there is *regularity*; if there were no death, on the contrary there would be no *regularity*."

(WS, 10/4B/8-10?)

The Ch'êngs do not directly criticize the doctrine of reincarnation, being restrained by the traditional Confucian unwillingness to enquire into what follows death. Yi-ch'u'an observes that:

"There are no grounds for saying either that the dead are conscious or that they are unconscious." (YS, 70/14)

He commits himself to saying only that death must be accepted as part of the natural order, in which everything has its opposite; if we understand life we shall realize that we cannot have it without death, just as there could be no spring if there were no winter. He often quotes in this connexion a saying of Confucius ("When you still do not know life, how can you know death?") and a sentence from the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes* ("Having fathomed the beginning, he goes back to the end, and therefore knows the explanation of death and life.")<sup>10</sup>

"To fathom the beginning is enough to know the end; and then to go back to the end is enough to know the beginning. The explanation of death and life is nothing else but this. Therefore if you take spring as the beginning and fathom it, you know there must be a winter; if

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG YI-CH'UAN

you take winter as the end and go back to it, you know there must be a spring. Death and life are analogous to this." (YS, 356/8f)

When his disciple Pao Jo-yü sent him arguments in favour of reincarnation, Yi-ch'uan was content to refer him to the same quotations.<sup>11</sup> Replying to a similar enquiry by another disciple, T'ang Ti, he limited himself to denying that the "talent"<sup>\*</sup> is due to karma acquired in previous incarnations:

"Q. What about the Buddhist view of the nature?

"A. Buddhists also say that basically it is good. But they should not ascribe the talent to karma.

"Q. What about their view of the cycle of life and death?

"A. Their comparison with bubbles in water has some point.

"Q. Is what the Buddhists say about reincarnation true?

"A. It is equally difficult to say that there is and that there is not reincarnation; one must attain insight into the matter by oneself. Confucius settled the matter in a sentence when he said to Tzü Lu: 'When you still do not know life, how can you know death?'"

(YS, 318/10-12)

\* p.48

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Fei-jan chi*, 19/1B/6-2A/4.

<sup>2</sup> *Chuang-tzü*, *Harvard-Yenching Sinological Index Series*, 17/6/54.

<sup>3</sup> *Analects*, L, 288/10-289/1.

<sup>4</sup> *Mencius*, L, 448/10-449/3.

<sup>5</sup> *Chung-shuo*, 5/1A/3-1B/9, cf. YS, 286/14, 172/11, 147/2, 242/9.

<sup>6</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 383/10-384/1.

<sup>7</sup> *Analects*, L, 168/6-8.

<sup>8</sup> CSL, 427.

<sup>9</sup> *Chuang-tzü*, ut sup. 18/6/66f.

<sup>10</sup> *Analects*, L, 241/1. *Great Appendix*, Sung, 278/3, cf. 330/1. Quoted YS, 170/2, 211/4, 219/4f, 356/8. YCWC, 7/17B/2.

<sup>11</sup> YCWC 5/17A-18A.



PART II

THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF CH'ENG MING-TAO



## INTRODUCTION

Since the ideas common to the two Ch'êngs have already been considered in connexion with Yi-ch'u'an, this section will be concerned only with five separate questions on which Ming-tao had opinions peculiar to himself or more fully developed than those of his brother. Like Yi-ch'u'an, he believes that all things are united by a single principle which is present in man as his nature; but he assumes that we become aware of this principle by looking into ourselves, and do not, as his brother supposes, need to look for it in external things. Behind this difference one can recognize a fundamental difference of attitude. Yi-ch'u'an's approach is exclusively intellectual and moral, and is informed by nothing more inspiring than a rather arid Confucian respectability; its aim is to justify the traditional Confucian values and to explain the process by which one learns them. Although his sayings to his disciples seldom give reasons for his opinions, one can see that they are intellectually coherent and that they provide solutions for real problems. Ming-tao's thought is much vaguer and less consistent, but one has the impression that his view of life is emotionally much richer. For him, as for the Taoists and Buddhists, the underlying unity of all things is not merely a concept but an inward experience—to be known, however, not by solitary ecstasies but by moral action. What unites us to things is not, as it is for Yi-ch'u'an, merely principle which can be extended by inference, but a vital, creative, and mysterious power universally active within the operations of heaven and earth. Such an idea as that of the mutual dependence of opposites is used by Yi-ch'u'an when, for example, he wants a reason for accepting death; for Ming-tao it is a harmony to be appreciated for itself, which gives meaning to life and death, good and evil.

1. *JĒN* (BENEVOLENCE)

*Jén* 仁 is the major Confucian virtue, the first of the "five norms".\* Originally it was not the name of a single moral quality, but a collective name for the moral qualities expected of a *jén* 人 "man". The latter word was applied at first only to members of the noble clans; very early it was extended to "man" in general, although even in the Sung dynasty there was still a tendency to confine it to civilized men (that is, Chinese), excluding barbarians as well as birds and animals. The moral term *jén* therefore covers those virtues which distinguish, first the gentleman from the peasant (compare the English "gentle", "noble"), later the civilized man from savages and beasts (compare "human, humane"). In early Confucianism the English equivalent "benevolence", made standard by Legge's translations of the *Classics*, is quite inadequate; and Waley, in his version of the *Analects of Confucius*, has been driven to the expedient of using "Good", distinguishing *jén* from other words meaning "good" by the use of the capital letter.

However, what concerns us is not the original meaning of *jén*, but the meaning which the Sung philosophers read into the Confucian classics. For the Neo-Confucians, *jén* is the altruistic principle in the nature, reflected among the passions by the feeling of sympathy at another's misfortune. It so happens that, although Europe agrees with China in regarding a disinterested concern for the well-being of others as the basis of morality, there is no convenient English word to indicate this concern—a lack which has presented difficulties to English moral philosophers as well as to translators from the Chinese. There is no opposite of "selfishness" except the negative "unselfishness". The chief possibilities are "altruism" (the opposite of "egoism"), and "benevolence", the term chosen by Bishop Butler as the counter-part of "self-love" in his system. When it is remembered that Legge was deeply interested in Butler (as he shows in the introduction to his version of *Mencius*), and that his interpretation of *jén* follows the Neo-Confucian commentaries of Chu Hsi, it will be seen that he

\* p.48

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

shows more discrimination in his choice of "benevolence" for *jén* than has perhaps been generally realized.

According to Yi-ch'uan, who defines it more clearly than his brother, to be *jén* is to regard oneself and another as one and not two, to be disinterested (*kung* 公) and not selfish (*ssü* 私). In a phrase the terseness of which it would be a pity to spoil by expanded translation, he says:

"*Jén* then one, not *jén* then two." (YS, 67/13)

"If you are benevolent, of course you are one (with others); it is oneness that characterizes benevolence. On the other hand sympathetic distress belongs to love; it is passion, not nature." (YS, 185/12)

"Q. 'What is benevolence like?'

"A. 'It is nothing but disinterestedness.' When students asked about benevolence, he always taught them to think over the word 'disinterested'." (YS, 311/7)

"To sum up the way of benevolence, it is enough to say the one word 'disinterested'. Disinterestedness is only the principle of benevolence, and may not itself be called benevolence. Disinterestedness, being embodied in man, thereby becomes benevolence. It is because when we are disinterested things and the self are seen in the same light that benevolence is that by which we are capable of consideration for others and of love. Consideration is the application while love is the function of benevolence." (YS, 170/10f)

"Where there is disinterestedness there is unity, where there is selfishness there are innumerable divisions." (YS, 160/12)

Yi-ch'uan contradicts himself on whether benevolence is simply one of the five norms or whether (as Ming-tao believes) it includes the other four and thus embraces the whole nature:

"Since ancient times no one has explained the meaning of the word 'benevolence'. The five norms, of which it is one, must be distinguished from each other within the Way. If benevolence were only the complete body, there would only be four. Taking the human body as a parallel, benevolence is the head while the other four 'beginnings'\* are the hands and feet." (YS, 171/8f)

"Benevolence can include wisdom, but wisdom cannot include benevolence—just as the human body as a whole can be referred to simply as the body, but if you are distinguishing the parts, there are four limbs." (YS, 316/11f, cf. 14/11?)

\* p.53

Ming-tao shares the assumption of his brother that there is a single principle running through all things, that it is present in man as his nature, and that he is aware of it inside him as the five moral norms. Since for Ming-tao benevolence, a positive and disinterested concern for others, is the whole of morality, it is by the presence of benevolence within us that we are aware of principle and of our unity with others. By benevolence we are one "body" or "substance" (*t'i*) with all things. Not to feel a disinterested sympathy with others is to lose the consciousness that they are one substance with oneself. It is like numbness in a limb—a simile which recurs frequently in Ming-tao's sayings and which in unattributed sayings can be taken as almost certain evidence that he is the speaker. It is a comparison which illuminates Ming-tao's conception of benevolence from several points of view. It implies that I am one with others as I am one with my own limbs; as long as my completeness or "integrity" (*ch'eng*) is preserved I am as sensitive to the needs of others as to my own. This unity can also be seen from another point of view; since I am the universe, "external" things are really within me, as my limbs are part of my body. I already possess them and do not need to desire them, since, in the words of Mencius, "the innumerable things are all complete within me."<sup>1</sup> The analogy with physical numbness also suggests that benevolence implies living and giving life—a point which can't be left out of account until we come to consider Ming-tao's conception of the Changes.\*

"Medical books use the term 'unfeeling' (not *jén*) for numbness in the hands and feet; this is an extremely good way to describe it. By benevolence heaven and earth and the innumerable things are regarded as one substance, so that nothing is not oneself; and when this is recognized there is nothing one will not do for them. If they are not possessed in the self, naturally they are of no concern to it, just as when the hands and feet are 'unfeeling', the humours (*ch'i*) do not circulate through them and they no longer belong to oneself. Hence Confucius said that by 'giving widely and assisting all' the qualities of the sage are realized in practice; but since benevolence is extremely difficult to describe, all he said of it was, 'Wishing to stand oneself, help others to stand; wishing to arrive oneself, help others to arrive. An ability to judge the needs of others by one's own may be described as the means to apply benevolence.'<sup>2</sup> By making us look at

\* p.111

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

benevolence from this point of view, he wished to help us to grasp what it is."<sup>5</sup> (YS, 15/5-7)

"When there is perfect benevolence, heaven and earth are regarded as one body, and the different things and innumerable forms within heaven and earth as the 'four limbs and hundred members'. How can any man regard his 'four limbs and hundred members' without love? The sage is benevolent to perfection, simply because he alone can embody this attitude [literally 'this mind']. Why should he make all sorts of distinctions and look for [benevolence] outside him? [i.e. his approach to things is governed by the single principle of benevolence inside him; without it each thing would present a separate problem.] Hence 'the ability to judge the needs of others by one's own' was offered by Confucius to Tzü Kung as 'the means to apply benevolence'.<sup>2</sup> Some medical books describe paralysis of the hands and feet by saying that the limbs are 'unfeeling', because pain in them does not affect the mind. What better term could there be for unawareness of pain in hands and feet which are part of oneself? The self-injury of the callous and merciless men in the world is no different from this."

(YS, 81/1-4?, cf. 34/12?, 132/14, WS, 3/1A/13f?)

This emphasis on the unity of man with heaven and earth is also found in Chang Tsai's *West Inscription*, which both the Ch'êngs greatly admired:

"What fills heaven and earth is my substance; what directs heaven and earth is my nature."<sup>3</sup>

Yi-ch'uán also occasionally makes remarks such as that when perfection is reached "there is no longer anything in the world outside the nature", and that when the mind is quiescent "the innumerable things are already completely present, as thick as a forest", so that the things which act on it are really stimulating it from within.<sup>4</sup> But his prosaic and down-to-earth temperament makes him use the conception of a single principle uniting man with the universe as an objective justification for Confucian morality rather than as an excuse for mystical transports:

"Ch'én Kuei-yi, questioning Yi-ch'uán, said: 'As I see it, all that fills heaven and earth is my nature; I no longer know that my body is me'. Yi-ch'uán said with a smile: 'When someone else has a good meal, aren't you hungry any more?'" (WS, 11/3A/10f)

The most complete statement of Ming-tao's views on benevolence is found in a passage commonly known as the *Essay on Knowing*

*Benevolence.* In this the phrases "this principle" and "this Way" are evidently interchangeable with benevolence, which (since it includes all the moral norms) is principle as we experience it within us:

"The student must begin by knowing benevolence. By benevolence we are one undivided substance with things. Duty, propriety, wisdom and good faith [the other four norms] are all benevolence. It is only necessary to succeed in knowing this principle and to preserve it by integrity and composure. There is no need to be on one's guard nor to make deep inquiries. If the mind relaxes we must be on guard; but if not, what is there to guard against? Inquiry is necessary only because there are principles which have not yet been grasped; if they have been constantly preserved they will be clear of themselves, and what need is there to inquire? This Way is not the opposite of anything, so that 'great' is too weak a word to describe it [*i.e.* while things are all Yin or Yang, the Way is not relative to anything but absolute]. The functions [contrast 'substance'] of heaven and earth are all my functions. Mencius says that the innumerable things are all complete in me, and that there is supreme joy only when I look into myself and find integrity.<sup>1</sup> Until there is integrity, there are still two things in mutual opposition; it will never be possible to possess what is external by joining the self to it, not to achieve this joy. The purpose of Chang Tsai's *West Inscription* is to give a complete account of what benevolence is.<sup>2</sup> If we preserve it according to the idea of the *West Inscription*, there will be no more to do. 'Action is necessary to it but do not correct the mind; do not forget it but do not help it to grow.'<sup>3</sup> Never to exert the least effort is the way to preserve it. If it can be preserved there should be success, for one's innately good knowledge and ability have never been lost. When former bad habits have not yet been removed it is none the less necessary to train the mind; eventually it will be possible to get rid of old habits. This principle is perfectly simple, the only difficulty is an inability to abide by it; but when we find joy in being able to embody it, there is no more of this difficulty." (YS, 16/12-17/4)

While Ming-tao agrees with his brother that principle can be discerned either in oneself or in outside things, he draws a slightly different practical conclusion. According to Yi-ch'uan, moral development depends on the "investigation of things"; although it is possible to recognize principle by introspection, in general we only become aware of it within us after we have learned to recognize it in external

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

situations. But according to Ming-tao, as long as integrity is preserved we are aware of principle within us and do not need to investigate it in outside things. This is of course only a difference of emphasis; but in later centuries it was to become the central issue in Neo-Confucian thought, and the view that moral insight can be derived from introspection even without learning was developed in opposition to the school of Chu Hsi by Wang Shou-jén. ("Innately good knowledge", a term from Mencius<sup>7</sup> used by Ming-tao in the *Essay on Knowing Benevolence*, became one of his slogans.) Ming-tao several times insists that it is a mistake to waste time prying into outside things:

"There is no need for the student to seek [the principles] far afield; the simplest course is merely to find them near at hand in oneself, understanding that for man Principle is nothing but composure. In the *Changes* the *Ch'ien* diagram deals with the learning of the sage, *K'un* with that of the worthy; they only say '[The gentleman] is composed and thereby corrects himself within, is moral and thereby orders what is external. When composure and morality are established he will not be alone in his virtue.' Even for the sage this is all; there is no other path. To make hair-splitting enquiries and comparisons is in itself a denial of principle (*tao-li*)."<sup>8</sup> (YS, 20/5f)

"The 'extension of knowledge' only means knowing how to rest in perfect goodness . . . as a son to rest in filial piety, as a father to rest in compassion, for example. There is no need to go outside, labouring to observe the principles of things, which is to wander lost like a rider without a destination."<sup>9</sup> (YS, 109/12?)

It is therefore not surprising that the "investigation of things" (*ké-wu*), the phrase from the *Great Learning* on which his brother and all later Neo-Confucians lay so much stress, is mentioned by Ming-tao only to express the same view as Yi-ch'uán's on the meaning of *ké* and in connexion with the duties of the censorate.<sup>10</sup> His disciple Yang Shih, who holds the same subjectivist position, claims that the things to be investigated are in fact inside oneself:

"To practise this Way, the first necessity is to understand good, after which one knows how to practise good. The understanding of good lies in the extension of knowledge, and the extension of knowledge in the investigation of things. Since the number of them is countless, of course there are things which it is beyond our power to exhaust; but when one looks back into oneself with integrity, all the things of the world are in the self. The Ode says: 'Ever since heaven

produced the people, where there is a thing there has been a rule.<sup>10</sup> The forms and colours which are complete in myself are all things, and each has a rule; if I look into myself to seek them, the principles of the world will be grasped."<sup>11</sup>

Ming-tao uses his doctrine of the unity of man and things, of internal and external, to refute the Buddhist assumption that it is necessary to abolish the passions and all perception of external things. So long as we recognize that things are one with ourselves we react to them spontaneously, as the parts of the body adjust themselves to each other. There is no need to suppress the passions, because they will accord spontaneously with the principle which unites us to the object; we shall enjoy what deserves to be enjoyed, be angry with what deserves anger. The passions will be attached to the object and not to the self and will pass when the object passes, and in this sense we shall have no passions; it is only when the self is conceived to be distinct from outside things that it will begin to desire them and they will present it with temptations. This theory is expounded in Ming-tao's *Letter on Stabilizing the Nature*, which was written to Chang Tsai about 1060, only a few years after the two men had finally broken away from Buddhist influence. "Stabilizing the nature" (*ting-hsing* 定性) or "stabilizing the mind" (*ting-hsin* 定心) is in fact the standard rendering of the Buddhist term *samādhi* (the concentration of the mind in meditation) and for this reason was disliked by Yi-ch'uan.<sup>12</sup> The letter deserves translation in full.

"Thank you for your letter, in which you say that in 'stabilizing the nature' you cannot yet avoid movement and are still attached to external things. This you have considered thoroughly, and what can you expect to learn from me? But I have given consideration to it and venture to make my opinion public. In what is called 'stability', one is stable in movement as well as in stillness; it is the state in which we do not follow things as they withdraw nor go to meet them as they come, and there is no distinction of internal and external. If you treat external things as external, and pull yourself after them, this is to assume that your own nature has an inside and an outside. Moreover if you suppose that the nature goes outside to follow things, while it is abroad what do you think remains within? This is to aim at cutting off external temptations without realizing that the nature has no outside and inside. When within and without are treated as ultimately different, what right has one to speak of 'stability'? It is

a constant [principle] that heaven and earth, since with their mind they pervade the innumerable things, have no mind; and that the sage, since with his passions he follows the innumerable activities, has no passions [*i.e.* the mind and the passions are attached to the object and not to heaven and earth and to the sage]. Therefore nothing that the gentleman learns is more important than to be completely disinterested towards everything, responding in accordance with things as they come. The *Book of Changes* says: 'If you are correct there will be good fortune and no regret. But if you come and go haphazardly, only friends will follow your thoughts'.<sup>13</sup> If you bewilder yourself trying to get rid of external temptations, as soon as they are extinguished in one place you will see them spring up in another. It is not only that there is no time to suppress them all; rather, since the occasions for them are infinite, to get rid of them is impossible.

"It is inherent in men that each has his blind spot, which prevents him from according with the Way; but in general the trouble lies in selfishness and calculation. If you are selfish, you cannot regard action as an immediate response; if you are calculating, you cannot regard insight as spontaneous. Now if, with a mind that hates external things, you seek to reflect a world in which there are no things, this is to expect the mirror to reflect although you have turned it over. The *Book of Changes* says: 'Stopping with averted back, he is unaware of self; walking in his yard, he does not see other people'.<sup>14</sup> Mencius also says: 'What I hate in calculating people is the way they bore into things'.<sup>15</sup> Rather than reject what is external and approve what is internal, it is better to forget the distinction between them. If both are forgotten you become serene and untroubled; if untroubled, stable; if stable, clear-sighted; if clear-sighted, why should you any longer be distressed about responding to things?

"The sage rejoices over things which deserve rejoicing, and is angry with things that deserve anger, so that his joy and anger are not attached to his mind but attached to things. This being so, how can he fail to respond to things? How can it be considered wrong to follow external things and right to seek within? Is there not a great difference between a selfish and calculating joy and anger, and the correctness in joy and anger of the sage?

"Anger, even more than the other human passions, is easily aroused but difficult to control. But if, when you are angered, you can at once forget the anger and examine what is right and wrong in principle,

even here it will be apparent that it is not worth while to hate external things, and you will not have much further to go in the Way.

"The subtlest thoughts of the mind cannot be expressed in words. In addition I am unskilful in writing and distracted by official duties. I have not been able to unravel the rights and wrongs and give you an answer. But this should be close to the truth in all essentials. To seek far afield though the Way is near was condemned by the men of old. It is for you to decide the question." (MTWC, 3/1AB)

If we do not recognize that the self is one with outside things selfishness arises, and we either surrender to desire or waste ourselves in a sterile "hatred of external things" and a hopeless effort to control desires which as soon as they are suppressed in one place return in another. At the same time morality becomes a matter of calculation, of thinking out what my duty must be instead of knowing it spontaneously. What Ming-tao means by the calculation which distorts insight is shown by this anecdote:

"Once when Ming-tao was sitting unoccupied in a granary at Ch'ang-an, he looked at the pillars in the long corridor and counted them in his head. Still not quite certain, he counted them a second time and the results did not agree. He was reduced to getting someone to count them calling the numbers aloud one by one. Then it turned out that he had counted them correctly the first time; and he realized that the more one exerts the mind to grasp something, the more uncertain is its hold." (YS, 48/5f)

As long as we are one with things, passions are attached to their objects and not to the self, and leave no trace when the cause is removed:

"The wind and the bamboos are an example of unconscious stimulation and response. If someone angers you, do not lodge your anger in your breast; you must be like the bamboos moved by the wind."

(WS, 7/1B/6?)

But if the self is cut off from things, passion accumulates inside it and may be displaced on to the wrong object. The phrase "*displacing anger*" used in the *Analects of Confucius*<sup>16</sup> is often used by the Ch'êngs. Ming-tao says:

"In one whose blood has been excited, anger is certain to be displaced. When a mirror reflects things, the beauty and ugliness are outside and the mirror responds in accordance with the thing. If the anger is not within, how can it be displaced?" (YS, 142/13)

The point is explained more fully by Yi-ch'u'an:

"When the sage Shun punished the four evil men, his anger was in them: what had Shun to do with it? For he was angry with a man because he deserved anger; the mind of the sage is fundamentally without anger. It may be compared to a mirror; when a beautiful or ugly thing comes one sees that it is beautiful or ugly, but how can there ever be beauty or ugliness in the mirror? Of course there are plenty of men in the world who get angry at home and still show it when they are in the market. When you are angry with one man can you resist showing your anger when you are talking to someone else? A person who has sufficient control of himself to be angry with one man and not with others already has an exceptional awareness of moral principle. Is it not very difficult to act as the thing requires like the sage, always without anger? The gentleman subjects things, the small man is subject to things. Now when we see something which deserves joy or anger, it is exhausting to make part of oneself go along with it. The mind of the sage is like still water." (YS, 232/12-233/2)

The mind should respond to things without retaining any trace of them, as the bamboos become still when the wind ceases, and the mirror no longer reflects the object which has been removed. Even to find one's mind dwelling on a trivial matter after it has been finished with is evidence that the self is out of connexion with the external world:

"One day when Ming-tao was in Shan-chou they were repairing a bridge, and searched far and wide among the people for a long beam which was needed. Afterwards, whenever on the way to or from the town he noticed a fine tree in the forest, he found himself estimating its size. So he told his students about it, as a warning that no matter should be retained in the mind." (YS, 70/3f)

The same assumptions are implied by certain observations by Yi-ch'u'an on dreams. Dreams are a proof that past experience has not been completely lived out; the sage has none, except for prophetic dreams in which he is genuinely responding to something outside him:

"Q. Why is it that things which one did not wish to do during the day are often seen at night in dreams?

"A. It is only because the mind is unstable. What men see in dreams is not limited to matters of the previous day; sometimes we dream of things which happened ten or twenty years ago. This is only because the matter has long been present in the mind, and during the day

suddenly something happens which makes contact with it; and if their ethers stimulate each other, it comes out in the dream. Consequently we sometimes dream even of matters which we hate during the day. This may be compared to the formation of waves when the water is disturbed by wind; when the wind stops, the waves still go on dashing together. This naturally does not apply to the man who has trained himself for a long time. Sages and worthies do not have these dreams; they only have premonitions which take shape in dreams. There are men who do not have dreams, because their ether is either exceptionally pure or exceptionally impure. The sage has no dreams because his ether is pure, while the man suffering from extreme exhaustion has none because the dull ether which obscures him prevents him from dreaming. As for Confucius dreaming of seeing the Duke of Chou,<sup>17</sup> it is a different matter from the dreams of ordinary men. By their dreams men can divine how deep their own learning goes. If dreams are confused, the will is not stable, control is not secure."

(YS, 224/2-7, cf. 8-11, 55/14?, 250/7-13, 335/1-3)

As we have seen from the *Letter on Stabilizing the Nature*, the self experiences desire, and things present temptations, only when it is not recognized that self and things are the same. The Buddhist endeavour to suppress sense-perception and the passions is therefore an attack on the symptoms only, and is a proof that the motive of the Buddhists is fundamentally selfish; they wish to remain separate selves and yet to get rid of the desires and temptations which are the price one pays for this separation. According to a passage which Chu Hsi ascribed to Ming-tao<sup>18</sup>.

"The reason why it is said that the innumerable things are one substance is that all have this principle, simply because it is from there [i.e. from principle, also called the Changes] that they come. 'Production and reproduction is what is meant by the Changes.'<sup>19</sup> Once they are produced, whenever they are produced, all possess this principle complete. Men can reason (*t'u*) while things cannot, because the ether of which they are constituted is dull; but it would be wrong to say that they do not share in its possession. Man, simply because out of selfishness he thinks in terms of his own body, has only a limited conception of principle. But how great a joy it is for him to let go of this self and see it on a level with the rest of the innumerable things! The Buddhists, ignorant of this, think in terms of the self and are at a loss to deal with it. Therefore they turn to hating it and want to get

rid of sense-perception; and because the source of the mind is unstable, they want to be like withered trees and dead ashes. But this is impossible [literally 'there is not this principle'] or is possible only by death. The Buddhists say all that because really they cannot bring themselves to let go of the self. They are like the pedlar insect, which, even when it cannot carry its present load, deliberately goes on putting things on its back; or like a man who sinks in a river holding a stone, and although its weight makes him sink deeper never thinks of letting go of it, but merely resents its weight." (YS, 34/14-35/5?)

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Mencius*, L, 450/10-451/2.

<sup>2</sup> *Analects*, L, 194/6-9.

<sup>3</sup> CTCS, 2/1.

<sup>4</sup> YS, 225/12, 171/2.

<sup>5</sup> "What benevolence is" is literally "the substance of benevolence"—what it is in itself, in contrast with its practical application (YS, 15/3, 7, 17/1).

<sup>6</sup> *Mencius*, L, 190/8f. Ming-tao punctuates it in this way (see Appendix 1, note 3).

<sup>7</sup> *Mencius*, L, 456/3-9.

<sup>8</sup> YS, 142/4, 363/4.

<sup>9</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 20/5f.

<sup>10</sup> *Odes*, L, 541/1f.

<sup>11</sup> *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 56/13-57/2.

<sup>12</sup> YS, 223/4.

<sup>13</sup> Sung, 137/6.

<sup>14</sup> Sung, 219/1.

<sup>15</sup> *Mencius*, L, 331/3f.

<sup>16</sup> *Analects*, L, 185/3.

<sup>17</sup> *Analects*, L, 196/4-6.

<sup>18</sup> CSL, 432-4.

<sup>19</sup> Sung, 281/2.

2. *YI* (THE CHANGES), *SHĒN* (PSYCHIC)

The early Neo-Confucian systems were built to answer two fundamentally different although often confused questions:

(A) Men and animals coming into the world and dying, plants growing and withering through the four seasons, the perceptions, intentions, emotions with which I respond to external stimulation, are all constantly emerging out of nowhere and disappearing into nowhere. From what source do they come?

Answer: The Supreme Ultimate, a primal one out of which things divide (Liu Mu, Shao Yung) or from which they grow (Chou Tun-yi); the Supreme Void, the rarefied ether in which things condense (Chang Tsai).

(B) There are regularities in natural processes and in human behaviour, from which inferences can be drawn and right action prescribed. In what does this regularity consist?

Answer: In following *li*, the natural grain of the universe.

The older Sung philosophers were mainly concerned with question (A). Of the three men who founded Neo-Confucianism proper, Chang Tsai shared the same approach; Yi-ch'uan raised question (B) to the first place, and remained unique in asking this question alone; Ming-tao asked both questions, using *li* to deal with one and other terms (*yi*, *shén*) to deal with the other. Chu Hsi finally co-ordinated the two questions by identifying the Supreme Ultimate with *li*.

The Sung philosophers do not conceive the origin of things as "creation" by Someone standing outside the universe, but as "breeding" "growth" (*shéng*) from Something at the root of the universe. The analogy behind their thinking is not a man making a pot, but rather a tree growing from its hidden root and branching out. But even apart from the impossibility of it receiving a theistic answer, question (A) is very unlike the demand for a First Cause in Christian theology. The idea that the universe must have had a beginning in time, which seems obvious, even a logical necessity, to many Europeans, is quite foreign to Chinese thought; thus Chu Hsi, who held with Shao Yung that the universe is annihilated and reborn every

129,600 years, took it for granted that there were other cycles before the present cycle.<sup>1</sup> Nor, of course, did the Sung philosophers have any idea of universal causation, in terms of which every event is explicable except the event which started the series. On the contrary, it is precisely because the production and growth of things is not explained by preceding physical causes that it is necessary for them to postulate an unseen source out of which things are continually manifesting themselves. For example, in Chou Tun-yi's system the Supreme Ultimate does not stand at the beginning of time; the Yin and Yang are constantly growing out of the Supreme Ultimate, and it is this which keeps the universe in motion.

A system based on *Li* implies a purely rational and moral view of life; I am one with the universe only in the sense that the principles by which I explain events and judge men's actions also apply to myself. Yi-ch'uan's idea of a single principle running through all things has no emotional content except for a faint satisfaction that the universe is tidy, a fit place for a Confucian gentleman to live in. On the other hand the conception of an inscrutable source out of which I and all things grow implies the unity of the vital and productive forces behind the surface of things and within oneself; it appeals to a sensibility which perceives in things the vitality and mystery of the forms which loom out of empty space in Sung landscape painting. This type of nature mysticism, Taoist and Zen Buddhist in origin, is found not only in Shao Yung and Chou Tun-yi, in whom the Taoist influence is strong in any case, but also in Ming-tao. One of his sayings recalls that

"Chou Tun-yi would not clear away the grass under his window. When questioned he said: 'It is the same in kind as my own thoughts'." (YS, 64/12) A note by the disciple Hsieh Liang-tso adds: "Chang Tsai made a similar remark when looking at a braying ass".

According to Chang Chiu-ch'êng, a disciple of his disciple Yang Shih, "The steps under Ming-tao's library were covered with thick grass. When someone advised him to have it cut, he said 'No. I want always to see the vital impulses of creation.' He also bought a pond in which he kept small fish, and he was always going to look at them. When asked why he kept them, he said: 'I like to watch the innumerable things satisfied of themselves'."<sup>2</sup>

Even Yi-ch'uan was once blackmailed into professing such feelings: "Yi-ch'uan came again with Chang Hsün during the spring. Shao

Yung invited them to go for a walk with him on the T'ien-mén road to look at the flowers. Yi-ch'uan declined, saying that he had never been in the habit of looking at flowers. Shao Yung replied: 'What is the harm? All things have ultimate principles. We look at flowers differently from ordinary men, in order to see into the mysteries of creation.' Yi-ch'uan said: 'In that case I shall be glad to accompany you'." (YCWC Supplement 5A/6-8) o

It is not surprising that Ming-tao cannot altogether reconcile the moral and rational concern with principle shared by his brother with his acute sensitivity to the vital forces of nature. For him, as for Yi-ch'uan, the Way of Heaven is principle; but it is also *shêng*,\* "generating", "giving life". According to the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes*

"Production and reproduction (*shêng shêng*) is what is meant by the Changes."<sup>a</sup>

The Changes (*Yi* 翼) are the cyclical replacements which proceed between heaven and earth, sun giving place to moon, day to night, heat to cold, reflected in the replacement of one diagram by another in the divinations of the *Book of Changes*. (Among Chinese words for "change" *yi* implies "A taking the place of B", often "changing places with B"; contrast *hua*, *pien*.†) Ming-tao takes the definition as proof that what is important in the Changes is not the cyclic motion of constant things such as the heavenly bodies, but the endless generation of new things in place of old.

"Inborn (*shêng*) is what is meant by nature";‡ the nature is principle, but it is also (since Ming-tao refuses to limit the sense of *shêng* to "inborn") the source of life and productive activity. By following the nature, living and giving life, we are at one with the Changes, the generative processes of heaven and earth. Ming-tao several times strings together quotations from the *Book of Changes* to show how many of the major Confucian terms can be defined in relation to *shêng*, which we shall translate variously by "produce", "life" and "vital":

"The supreme power of heaven and earth is to produce." 'From the generative forces of heaven and earth the innumerable things are evolved.'<sup>4</sup> 'The life in us'<sup>5</sup> is what is meant by nature.' It is most excellent to look into the vital impulses of the innumerable things. This is 'The Originating is at the head of goodness',<sup>6</sup> which is what

\* p.47      † p.41      ‡ p.47

is meant by benevolence. Man being one thing with heaven and earth, why should he belittle himself?" (YS, 133/1f)

"*'Production and reproduction* is what is meant by the Changes'; it is this which heaven regards as its Way. It is *production* which heaven regards as its Way, and what succeeds this *productive* principle is goodness. [The Way is above form; in the phenomenal world the Way is replaced by goodness.] Goodness has the implication 'Originating' ... 'The Originating is at the head of goodness.' That the innumerable things all have the impulses of spring is the significance of 'What succeeds (the Way) is goodness; that in which it is completed is the nature'.<sup>7</sup> But its completion depends on the innumerable things completing their natures of themselves."

(YS, 30/5f?, cf. 149/2-4)

Benevolence, elsewhere explained by the sense of unity with others, is here treated as the vital and creative principle. Although it is the former that is stressed, the latter is also implicit in Ming-tao's favourite comparison of lack of benevolence with numbness,<sup>†</sup> and it is made explicit by his disciple Hsieh Liang-tso:

"What is benevolence? To be alive is benevolence, to be dead is its opposite. When a man's body is numb, so that he does not feel pain, he is said to be 'unfeeling' (literally 'not jén'). A peachstone or apricot-stone which grows when planted is said to be 'feeling' (jén), meaning that it has the impulse of life. What benevolence can be inferred from these examples."<sup>8</sup>

The word *shén*, usually translated "spirit", was seldom used by Yi-ch'uan, who seems to have been suspicious of its mystical flavour. He observes that

"In the *Analects* Confucius never uses the word *shén*. Only in the *Changes* there were some places where he could not avoid speaking of it." (YS, 182/12)

In the thought of Chu Hsi and his successors also *shén* has only a minor place. But it is extremely prominent in the writings of Shao Yung, Chou Tun-yi and Chang Tsai; and in the case of Ming-tao, Ch'êng Chung-fan<sup>17</sup>, one of the best modern writers on Neo-Confucianism, goes so far as to consider *shén* rather than principle the counterpart of ether in his system. For all these, as for the authors of the appendices of the *Book of Changes*, *shén* is not a personal spirit but a daemonic power or intelligence which is active within the operations

\* p.134 f      † p.98 f

of heaven and earth and which emanates from the person of the sage. In Europe, an aura of uncanny power or intelligence radiating from a thing is ascribed to a personal spirit inside it, and adjectives referring to the aura ("daemonic", "psychic") are formed from nouns referring to the "daemon" or "psyche". (There is in any case a poor selection of such adjectives, since most of those formed from nouns referring to spirits imply moral qualities rather than power or insight – "angelic", "devilish", "spiritual", "soulful".) But in China the tendency to abstract a personal spirit from the numinous influence of a thing or place is much weaker than in Europe, and it has not affected the use of *shén* in philosophy. Thus in the appendices of the *Book of Changes* the word is less frequent as a noun than as an adjective, for which the least unsatisfactory English word is perhaps "psychic", applied to the Way, the Changes, the divining stalks, the sage, and the inner power or "mana" (*té*, usually translated "virtue"). With the last it is also used as transitive verb, "to make one's inner power psychic":

"We observe that by the psychic Way of Heaven, the four seasons do not err. When the sage establishes teaching according to the psychic Way, the world submits to him."

"Therefore the power of the stalks, being 'round' [without beginning or end, like the circumference of a stalk] is psychic; the power of the diagrams, because it is 'square' [making distinctions, like the separate sides of the square diagrams], is wise . . . The sage is psychic and thereby knows the future, wise and thereby stores up the past."

"They set up the psychic things [the divining stalks] to anticipate the needs of the people. Was it not for this that the sages fasted and purified themselves in order to make their power psychic and illuminating?"<sup>9</sup>

Even when *shén* is used in the appendices as a noun (several of the passages which will be quoted later in this chapter provide examples), it does not refer to any entity distinct from things which are *shén*. The *shén* of the divining stalks is not a "psyche" within them, but, so to speak, their "psychicity". We therefore cannot afford to use the standard English equivalent "spirit" even when the word is used as a noun, since to do so would disguise the fact that the Neo-Confucians treat it not as an entity like "principle", "ether", "nature", "mind", but as a state like "integrity", "composure", "equilibrium". In some of the following translations I shall be reduced to calling it "psychicity", without wishing to recommend this abominable word as a

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

permanent addition to the English language or even as a regular equivalent of *shén*.

The Sung school disagree as to whether *shén* is a substance or a function, Ming-tao taking the latter view. It is one of the awkward terms which fall between the two, for which, as we have noticed in the cases of "equilibrium" and "integrity",<sup>\*</sup> the Neo-Confucians have no category. Kuo Yung (son of the Ch'éng disciple Kuo Chung-hsiao), commenting on two passages in the appendices,<sup>10</sup> says:

(On "Therefore *shén* is without confines and the Changes are without body")

"There is no *shén* which is *shén* by itself. When it is in the Way, the Changes, or the sage, it is the *shén* of the Way, the Changes or the sage. *Shén* lodges in the Way, the Changes, the sage; but each of these has its own name and is not called *shén*. This is why *shén* is without confines."

(On "The word *shén* refers to what is inscrutable in the innumerable things.")

"The Way is the Way, the Changes is a book, the sage is a man; only *shén* is without confines and these three all possess it. Therefore, the Way, the Changes and the sage all possessing it, *shén* is not a separate thing; it is only because its way, manifested by its functioning, is inscrutable within the innumerable things, that it is named *shén*. The *shén* of the Changes and of the sage are both the same."<sup>11</sup>

The characteristic of *shén* which is most stressed by the Neo-Confucians is the capacity of whatever is *shén* to penetrate immediately through things without being obstructed by their forms. To penetrate through things is at once to act on them and to understand them; the two aspects of *shén*, power and intelligence, are not felt to be distinct. The *shén* of the sage is no doubt something like the dynamism which we feel radiating from a person of strong presence; and in this situation one is hardly conscious of a distinction between the sense of being under the pressure of his personal force and the feeling that "he can see right through me". According to the *Great Appendix*:

"Psychicity is without confines and the Changes are without body."

"It is only because it is psychic that it is swift without hurrying and arrives without having travelled."<sup>12</sup>

Chou Tun-yi says:

"What is without stillness when moving and without movement

\* pp.40f, 67

when still is a thing. What is without movement when it moves and without stillness when it is still is psychicity . . . which is not the same as not moving and not being still. Things cannot penetrate, while psychicity passes inscrutably through the innumerable things."<sup>13</sup>—that is, *shén* penetrates things immediately, moves to a place without any intervening movement.

Ming-tao says:

" 'It is only because it is psychic that it is swift without hurrying and arrives without having travelled' . . . Psychicity is not 'swift', nor does it 'arrive'. It had to be put in these terms because there is no other way to describe it." (YS, 133/5)

*Shén* is to be conceived, then, as a daemonic force issuing from all that is above form—on the one hand from the Way and the Changes, working inscrutably within the operations of heaven and earth, on the other hand from the sage, whose mind sees through all things, and whose moral influence is active everywhere. Taking the former point first, it is said in the appendices:

"The Yin and Yang in alternation are what is meant by the Way . . . That which is unfathomable in the Yin and Yang is what is meant by 'psychic'."

"To know the way of the transformations, is it not to know what is brought about by psychicity?"

"The word 'psychic' refers to what is inscrutable in the innumerable things."<sup>14</sup>

Ming-tao says:

"The cold of winter and heat of summer are the Yin and Yang. That by which they are moved and transformed is psychicity. 'Psychicity is without confines' and therefore 'the Changes are without body'. If like some you conceive a heaven distinct from man and say that man cannot embrace it, you imply that psychicity has confines. This is to have 'two ultimates'." (YS, 133/8f)—that is, since both the sage and heaven are *shén*, and *shén* is all-pervasive, it is the same in both of them.

" 'By comprehending psychicity you will know the transformations'.<sup>15</sup> . . . what is most inscrutable in the transformations is psychicity." (YS, 133/10)

The power issuing from the sage also influences all things, so that harmony within him is reflected in the regularity of society and of natural phenomena. (Here also the word used for the effects of *shén* is *hua* 化 "transformation".) According to Ming-tao:

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG MING-TAO

"(If Confucius had been a ruler) 'when he had made the people happy they would have come to him, when he moved them they would have been brought to harmony'.<sup>16</sup> The psychic transformations of the sage are 'what flows above and below, indistinguishable from heaven and earth'.<sup>18</sup> (YS, 134/9)

Commenting on Mencius ("What the gentleman passes is transformed; what he preserves is psychic."<sup>19</sup>), he says:

"'What he preserves is psychic'—within himself. 'What he passes is transformed'—his effect on things." (WS, 2/3A/6)

Being *shén*, the mind of the sage also has immediate knowledge of the principles of anything he examines. In this connexion the Ch'êngs repeatedly use a quotation from the *Great Appendix* which originally referred to the Changes:

"It is tranquil and unmoving, but when stimulated it penetrates the affairs of the world. If it were not of all things in the world that which is perfectly psychic, how would this be possible?"<sup>20</sup>

As we have seen in discussing his view of the mind,\* Yi-ch'u'an uses this quotation to describe the insight of the mind into principles.<sup>21</sup> The ordinary man shares in some degree this direct insight, although where the impurity of his ether hinders him he has to depend on inference; and to this extent we are all *shén*. According to an unattributed passage,

"Man's knowledge and thought are active because of psychicity."  
(YS, 89/3?)

Here the word *shén* is used to describe a part of experience which we have no difficulty in recognizing. The principle is in the thing, but the mind penetrates to it through the thing. Unlike the body, the mind is not obstructed by solid forms but passes right through them. Nor does it take time to cross the intervening space; it is "swift without hurrying and arrives without having travelled".

Chang Tsai says:

"It is one, therefore psychic. To take a parallel, because the four limbs of the human body are all one thing, wherever it is touched there is perception; perception does not have to wait until the mind has been sent to the affected place. This is what is meant by 'when stimulated it penetrates', and 'it arrives without having travelled and is swift without hurrying'. In the forms of things there are degrees of size and quality; psychicity has no degrees of quality, it is simply

\* pp.63

psychicity. There is no need to speak of utilizing it. It is the same as with a wheel, which is made of 'thirty spokes together with one hub'.<sup>22</sup> If there were no hub and spokes, how could the wheel be used?"—that is, *shén* does not have to move in order to make things move.<sup>23</sup>

On one point concerning *shén* there was a difference of opinion between Ming-tao and Chang Tsai. According to the latter, what is *shén* is the Supreme Void, the pure ether which moves freely in contrast with the impure ether which condenses into "things" with form:

"That which, being dispersed and separate, can be conceived as an image, is ether; that which, being pure and pervasive, cannot be conceived as an image, is psychicity."

"The Supreme Void is pure, and since it is pure, unobstructed, and since it is unobstructed, psychic. What is opposed to the pure is impure, and therefore is obstructed and therefore has form."

"'Psychic' indicates the inscrutable response of the Supreme Void. All the types and images of heaven and earth are merely the sediment of psychic transformations."

"The forms and colours of the innumerable things are the sediment of psychicity."

"Psychicity is the power of heaven, transformation is the way of heaven. The power is its substance, the Way is its function; it is only that they are one in the ether."

"Whenever the ether is pure it is pervasive, whenever it is dull it is impeded. When its purity is absolute it is psychic. Hence if there are gaps in the assembled (ether), when the wind goes through them the sound reaches everywhere. Is not this the test of purity? Is not 'to arrive without having travelled' to be absolutely pervasive?"<sup>24</sup>

Ming-tao objects that *shén* pervades all things without exception, so that even impure ether must be *shén*:

"Outside the ether there is no psychicity, outside psychicity there is no ether. If it is said that the pure is psychic, does this involve denying that the impure is also psychic?" (YS, 133/13)

"To locate the source of the innumerable things in the 'pure, void, one, and great' does not seem satisfactory. The only course is to treat as one pure and impure, void and solid. It is said of psychicity that it 'becomes one substance with things without exception'.<sup>25</sup> It should not be confined to one place." (YS, 21/9?)

How are the Changes and *shén* related to principle? Ming-tao is much vaguer than his brother in drawing distinctions, and no consistency can be observed in the way that principle, heaven, the Way, the Changes and *shén* fuse together and separate out in his thought. A couple of passages seem to imply that the Changes are the substance of heaven, *shén* the function, and principle or the Way the course along which the functioning proceeds:

"Production and reproduction is what is meant by the Changes", while the functioning of production and reproduction is psychicity."

(YS, 140/12)

"The operations of high heaven are without sound or smell."<sup>26</sup> Its substance is called the Changes, its principle is called the Way, its function is called psychicity, its decree for man is called the nature."

(YS, 4/12f? ascribed to Ming-tao by Chu Hsi)<sup>27</sup>

These distinctions seem intelligible up to a point. All things are united by principle running through them; they are set in movement and at the same time understood by *shén* which acts along the principle. *Shén* is itself the functioning of the Changes; it seems to be assumed that all changes past and present exist timelessly above the level of form, and that their function is their successive realization between heaven and earth. This view of the relation between *shén* and the Changes seems to have been an unusual one; Shao Yung, for example, held the opposite one:

"Psychicity is the ruler of the Changes, and therefore 'without confines'. The Changes are the function of psychicity, and therefore 'without body'.<sup>28</sup>"

Outside the passages just quoted, however, Ming-tao does not keep to these distinctions:

"Heaven is principle. 'The word "psychic" refers to what is inscrutable in the innumerable things.' God (*ti*) is the name given to it as the ruler of events." (YS, 145/7)

"Heaven and earth only have 'permanent positions'; 'the Changes proceeding between them'<sup>29</sup> are psychicity." (YS, 133/12)

"Heaven and earth have permanent positions and the Changes proceed between them."<sup>30</sup> Why not say man proceeds between them? Because man is also a thing. If it were said that 'Psychicity proceeds between them', men would look for it only in spirits (*kuei-shén* 鬼神). It would have been possible to say 'Principle' or 'Integrity'; but the purpose of merely saying 'the Changes' was to make men silently

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

remember it and grasp it by themselves." (YS, 130/4f) Here the Changes are identified with the mind of man (in contrast to his body), with *shén* (not to be confused with spirits) and with principle and integrity.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> YL, 1/7A/1-3.
- <sup>2</sup> SYHA, 5/38/12f.
- <sup>3</sup> Sung, 281/2.
- <sup>4</sup> Sung, 308/3, 322/4.
- <sup>5</sup> *Shéng* in Kao-tzu's definition of the nature (*Mencius*, L, 396/8) has elsewhere always been translated "inborn"; but here Ming-tao must be thinking of it in the sense of "life".
- <sup>6</sup> Sung, 5/1.
- <sup>7</sup> Sung, 280/2f.
- <sup>8</sup> *Shang-ts'ai yü-lu*, 1/2A/10-2B/2.
- <sup>9</sup> Sung, 91/6f, 297/5-7, 298/1-3.
- <sup>10</sup> Sung, 279/2, 296/2.
- <sup>11</sup> *Kuo-shih ch'uan-chia Yi-shuo*, 258/13f, 304/6f.
- <sup>12</sup> Sung, 279/2, 345/1.
- <sup>13</sup> CLHC, 102-3.
- <sup>14</sup> Sung, 280/1 and 281/5; 293/6, 345/1.
- <sup>15</sup> Sung, 317/4.
- <sup>16</sup> *Analects*, L, 349/6f.
- <sup>17</sup> 75-78.
- <sup>18</sup> *Mencius*, L, 455/4-6.
- <sup>19</sup> As in n.18.
- <sup>20</sup> Sung, 295/4-6.
- <sup>21</sup> YCWC<sup>6</sup>, 5/12A/8f, YS, 49/1-6?, 58/12-14?
- <sup>22</sup> *Tao-téh-ching*, 11.
- <sup>23</sup> CTCS, 234/16-235/2, partly reproduced YS, 160/3.
- <sup>24</sup> CTCS, 22/2, 24/3, 6, 26/6, 36/1, 24/4.
- <sup>25</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 397/7f.
- <sup>26</sup> *Odes*, L, 431.
- <sup>27</sup> YL, 5/15A/2, CSL, 23.
- <sup>28</sup> *Huang-chi ching-shih*, 12B/21A/10-21B/1.
- <sup>29</sup> Sung, 284/3.

## 3. MONISM AND DUALISM

The conflict between monism and dualism is one of the recurring themes of Neo-Confucian philosophy. Yi-ch'uan's system, which, in the form given it by Chu Hsi, was dominant until the present century, is dualist in implication; there is principle and there is ether, and to become a sage one has to deal with two basically unrelated factors, the absolute goodness of the former and the varying quality of the latter. Nevertheless, the Neo-Confucians, like ourselves, have a deep-rooted disinclination to believe that there is a fundamental dichotomy in things, that – in the phrase from Mencius<sup>1</sup> Ming-tao is always quoting – there are “two ultimates” (literally “two roots”). Although the orthodox Sung school follows a line of thought which leads to dualism, it does not make a point of affirming that there are two ultimates in the way that others affirm that there is one. Indeed, Yi-ch'uan is so much more interested in principle than in ether that he is scarcely aware of the issue; he is so concerned to show that all things are united by principle that he does not notice the widening gap between the things which are interrelated and the principle which relates them. Chu Hsi does give equal attention to principle and ether, but the point on which he lays most stress is not that neither can be reduced to the other but that neither can exist without the other. We have already seen, in discussing the attitude of the Ch'êngs to Buddhism, that this mutual dependence is demanded by the moral and practical bias of Confucianism. (“Outside the Way there are no things and outside things there is no Way.”)\* If there were things without principles, dealing with them would be outside the scope of morality. If there were principles without things, the Buddhists would be right in ridding themselves of action and sense-perception in order to arrive at them.

Yi-ch'uan's dualism is (with his elevation of *li* and his solution of the problem of human nature) a revolutionary development which changed the whole direction of Confucian thought. At first sight it might be supposed that a dualist tendency had always been implicit,

\* p.88f

even if it was only in Neo-Confucianism that it came to the surface. Certainly there was nothing new in the claim that entities such as the Way are immaterial and imperceptible, while at the same time their reality does not (as the Buddhists supposed) imply the unreality of material and perceptible things. Let us consider, however, some of the terms by which such entities are described in Chinese – *wei* 微, *hsü* 虛, *wu* 無, for which rough English equivalents are "imperceptible", "void", "nothing". The English terms seem to imply absolute imperceptibility, emptiness, non-existence. But *wei* is relative to *hsien* 顯 "manifest"; the more *wei* something is, the harder it is to discern. *Hsü* (relative to *shih* 實 "solid") implies not that a space is empty but that a substance is rarefied, thinned out; thus fire is *hsü* compared with more solid things. *Wu* "not-having" (relative to *yu* 有 "having") is primarily the absence of form and colour, and is similarly a matter of degree. Chinese metaphysical thinking is dynamic, conceiving A as forming out of and dissolving into B rather than as statically being or not being B.<sup>2</sup> The imperceptible can manifest itself, the rarefied can condense and become solid, the "not-having" can acquire form and colour. The continuity of the unseen source and the visible world is implicit in the characteristic metaphors by which their relation is expressed – root and tip (本末), spring and current (源流). It is because such terms as *wei* and *hsü* are relative that Yi-ch'uan, as we have seen\* refuses to apply them to principle. On his view, principle is not merely harder to perceive or more rarefied than ether; while ether is perceived by the senses, principle is perceived by the mind, to which it is perfectly "manifest" and "solid" (real).

We noticed in the last chapter the difference of approach between Yi-ch'uan, concerned with moral and logical principle, and most other early Sung philosophers, concerned with an ultimate source out of which things are generated. The former approach leads to dualism, the latter to monism. Liu Mu and Shao Yung explain the evolution of the universe by the division of a primal one, the Supreme Ultimate. In Chou Tun-yi's system the Supreme Ultimate "grows" or "breeds" (*shêng*) the Yin and Yang ether, the word *shêng* (which can be applied to a body growing hair but not to a man making a pot, as might be supposed when it is translated "produce") implying that the new comes out of and is the same in kind with the old. In Chang Tsai's

\* pp.14-16

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG MING-TAO

system things are ether condensing from the rarefied ether, the Supreme Void:

"The Supreme Void is formless, the basic substance of the ether."

"The assembly and dispersal of the ether in the Supreme Void is like the congealing and melting of ice in water. When it is recognized that the Supreme Void is the ether, it will be seen that there is no nothing."

He rejects all suggestions that the ether is produced by the void or that things are inside the void without being connected with it:

"When it is recognized that the void is the ether, the opposites something and nothing, hidden and manifest, psychic and transformation, nature and decree, are reduced to one. One who, regarding the assembly and dispersal, departure and arrival, formation and dissolution (of things), can trace them to the source from which they come, has a deep understanding of the Changes. If you say that the void can produce the ether, then since the void is infinite and the ether has limits, you imply that substance and function are dissimilar, and fall into Lao-tzu's theory of spontaneity, of 'something being born from nothing',<sup>3</sup> unaware of what is meant by the constant (principle) that 'something and nothing' are indivisible. If you say that the innumerable images are things seen within the Supreme Void, then since things and void are not mutually dependent, form being form of itself and nature nature of itself, and since form and nature, heaven and man, exist without being required by each other, you sink into the Buddhist doctrine that mountains, rivers, and the whole earth are illusions of the senses."<sup>4</sup>

At first sight one might be tempted to describe Shao Yung, Chou Tun-yi, and Chang Tsai as "idealists". They all assume that the Supreme Ultimate or Supreme Void is the innermost self of man, and Shao Yung explicitly identifies the Supreme Ultimate with the mind and says that "the innumerable transformations and activities are born in the mind"<sup>5</sup>. But there are dangers in applying the term "idealism" to any of the Sung philosophies. A Berkeleyan idealist denies the necessity of postulating an object perceived in addition to perception, matter in addition to mind. But the Neo-Confucians did not criticize sense-perception; their epistemology is "naïve realism". Those of them who are monists escape the duality of mind and ether, not by denying the existence of the latter, but by claiming that mind is perpetually becoming ether.

In the Ch'êng brothers and their successors, the issue is complicated by the growing division between those who look outwards for principle and those who look inwards. Extreme supporters of either approach tend to be monists, arguing that we must investigate external things because principle is only the structure of the ether, or that we must learn to deal with things by introspection because all things are within the mind. The former argument does not become prominent until the Ch'ing dynasty, notably in the work of Tai Chén (1723-1777); but the latter, associated with the names of Lu Chiu-yüan (1139-1192) and Wang Shou-jên (1472-1528), is already implicit in Ming-tao. In accordance with Confucian convention the problem has traditionally been discussed in relation to two passages in the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes*,<sup>6</sup> both so vague that it is scarcely possible to translate them without being committed to one side or the other:

**一陰一陽之謂道**

"The Yin and Yang in alternation are what is meant by the Way."  
or "The alternation of Yin and Yang is what is meant by the Way."

**是故形而上者謂之道，形而下者謂之器**

"Therefore above form it is called the Way, below form it is called the instruments (concrete things)."

or "Therefore what is above form is called the Way, what is below form is called the instruments."

The Yin and Yang are, for all the Neo-Confucian schools, the contraction and expansion of the ether, which is below form. If the first passage asserts the identity of the Yin and Yang and the Way, the second must mean that the same substance exists above the level of form as the Way and below it as concrete things. The dualist reply is that the former means only that the Way is "that by which" the ether contracts and expands, and does not exclude the possibility that it is different from the ether. The "locus classicus" for this controversy is the correspondence between Chu Hsi and Lu Chiu-yüan.<sup>7</sup> It has been observed by modern scholars that while Chu Hsi's interpretation is derived from Yi-ch'u'an, Lu Chiu-yüan's is anticipated by Ming-tao.<sup>8</sup>

Yi-ch'u'an says:

"The alternation of Yin and Yang is what is meant by the Way' - The Way is not the Yin and Yang; that by which (*so-yi*) the Yin and Yang alternate is the Way. It is like 'The alternation of closing and opening is called mutation'." (YS, 72/1)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG MING-TAO

"There is no Way in isolation from the Yin and Yang. That by which (ether) is Yin or Yang is the Way; the Yin and Yang are ether. The ether is what is below form, the Way is what is above form. What is above form is hidden." (YS, 179/8)

"The alternation of Yin and Yang is what is meant by the Way."—This principle is certainly too profound for explanation. That by which (ether) is Yin or Yang is the Way. The term 'ether' implies duality. When it is said to open and close, it is already stimulated; for when there are two there is mutual stimulation. That by which it opens and closes is the Way; the opening and closing are the Yang and Yin. The Taoist assertion that the void produces the ether is wrong. With the opening and closing of Yang and Yin there is ultimately no question of which comes first. One cannot say that there is Yin today and Yang tomorrow; they are like a man's form and shadow, which are simultaneous—one cannot say there is the form today and the shadow tomorrow. To have them is to have them both." (YS, 177/6-8)

On the other hand Ming-tao says:

"According to the *Great Appendix*,

'Above form it is called the Way, below form it is called the instruments',

"and

'[the sage, fixing the lines of the hexagrams] established them according to the way of heaven, calling them Yin and Yang, and according to the way of earth, calling them soft and hard, and according to the way of man, calling them benevolent and dutiful',<sup>10</sup>

"and again

"The Yin and Yang in alternation are what is meant by the Way.'

"The Yin and Yang are also below form, but they are called the Way; this statement is enough to make it perfectly clear how 'above' and 'below' are to be distinguished. The Way has never been anything but these; it is essential that men silently remember it." (YS, 130/6-8)

"'Yin and Yang', 'hard and soft', 'benevolence and duty'<sup>10</sup> are only this single principle (*tao-li*)."  
(YS, 6/8?, certainly Ming-tao's<sup>11</sup>).

"'Above form it is regarded as the Way, below form it is regarded as the instruments', must be explained in this way: The Way is the instruments and the instruments are the Way; if only you grasp the Way, you are not concerned with present and future, self and others."

(YS, 5/2?, ascribed to Ming-tao by Chu Hsi)<sup>12</sup>

"In 'Above form it is called the Way', one has no right to read 'is what is meant by' (*chih wei* 詖) for 'is called' (*wei chih*). This is the wording of Confucius." (WS, 2/1B/6)

The point of the last quotation is evidently that there is a difference of emphasis between *wei chih* and *chih wei*. "A *wei chih* B" ("A is called B") answers the question, "What is A called?" while "A *chih wei* B" ("A is what is meant by B") answers the question, "What is the thing called B?" Although this is not always the case, the former tends to be used to say that the same thing has several names, the latter to distinguish between different things. Precisely this argument was used seven hundred years later by Tai Chén to show that the Way and the instruments are merely different names for the ether before and after it assumes form.<sup>13</sup>

Thus according to Yi-ch'uan principle and ether are distinct but mutually dependent; the Way does not exist apart from the Yin and Yang but is necessary to them, since it is "that by which" they alternate. On the other hand Ming-tao, although he agrees with his brother in replacing the Supreme Ultimate by principle, still tends to think of what is "above form" as a generative source. He therefore continues the older monist tradition, holding that what is called the "Way" before it assumes form is called the "instruments" afterwards. But even Ming-tao is unwilling to commit himself to the assertion that things are produced by principle; and in the two passages which come nearest to saying so (and are therefore, although unattributed, probably his), the vague phrases "from there", "from here" are used in a way which suggests reluctance to say directly "from principle":

"The reason why it is said that the innumerable things are all one substance is that all have this principle, simply because it is *from there* that they come." (YS, 34/14?)

"'The innumerable things are all complete within me.' This is so not only of men but of all things; it is *from here* that all have emerged. It is only that things cannot reason (*t'u*) while man can reason from it [i.e. from principle]. But although he can reason from it, how can he make the least addition to it? Although they cannot reason, how should they possess it any the less? The innumerable principles are present complete and fully disposed. How can one say that in fulfilling the way of the ruler the sage Yao added anything to it, or that in fulfilling the way of the son the sage Shun added anything to the way of filial piety? For ever they are as they were of old." (YS, 35/7-9?)

Forke claims that Ming-tao carries his "idealism" so far as to assert that "only principle is real."<sup>14</sup> His authority is a passage in one collection of the sayings of the Ch'êngs, the *Ts'ui-yen*, which, since such a view can hardly have been held by Yi-ch'u'an, he attributes to Ming-tao:

或謂，「惟太虛爲虛」。子曰，「無非理也，惟理爲實」。

"Jemand sagte, 'Nur die grosse Leere ist leer'. Der Meister antwortete, 'Das ist die Vernunft. Nur die Vernunft ist real'."

(TY, 1/1A/10)

It seems more natural to translate the underlined sentences: "It is the Supreme Void which is most void" and "It is principle which is most real".<sup>15</sup> But in any case the *Ts'ui-yen* consists of very free paraphrases in literary language of sayings which are generally accessible elsewhere. This one proves, when traced to its source, neither to be Ming-tao's nor to assert that only principle is real:

"When the Supreme Void was mentioned he said: 'But there is no Supreme Void'. Then he observed of the Void: 'It is all principle; how can you call it void [i.e. unreal]?' There is nothing in the world more real than principle (天下無實於理者)."

(YS, 71/2 Yi-ch'u'an)

The idea that the external world is unreal is execrated by almost all Neo-Confucians as a Buddhist error, a mere excuse for running away from the duties of ordinary life. The sayings of the Ch'êngs attacking it<sup>16</sup> happen to be unattributed, but it is unlikely that on this point there was any difference between them.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Mencius*, L, 259/3, cf. Ming-tao YS, 1/7, 129/11, 133/9, 142/4. MTWC, 3/1A/7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Needham, 77,199,478. Needham and others (cf. his references) are reminded of the Hegelian dialectic. But changes, for the Chinese thinkers, recur without development; the antithesis is followed by a return to the thesis, not by a new synthesis.

<sup>3</sup> *Tao têh ching*, 33.

<sup>4</sup> CTCS, 22/4, 24/1, 22/11-23/1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 154.

<sup>6</sup> Sung, 280/1, 303/4.

<sup>7</sup> *Chu-tzu ta-ch'üan*, 36/9A/13-9B/12, 13A/1-7. *Hsiang-shan ch'üan-chi*, 24/6f, 29/14-30/7.

<sup>8</sup> Hsieh Wu-liang, 3/32. Feng Yu-lan, 877-9.

<sup>9</sup> Sung, 298/4f.

<sup>10</sup> Sung, 340/2f.

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

<sup>11</sup> Although unattributed, this is from the account of a conversation with Wang An-shih, whom Ming-tao frequently met at the capital; Yi-ch'uan, who did not hold office until after Wang An-shih's death, does not seem to have known him personally.

<sup>12</sup> YL, 5/15A/2, CSL, 23.

<sup>13</sup> Hsü-yen, 1B-2A. For *wei chih* and *chih wei*, cf. *Kimmō Yōjikaku*, 46.

<sup>14</sup> Forke, 73.

<sup>15</sup> For the sentence pattern 惟 (唯) ... 為 ... see, for example, *Analects*, L, 330/6f. 唯女子與小人為難養也 "It is girls and servants who are most difficult to deal with."

"惟 (唯) ..." of course means 'It is ... which ...', often but not always implying "It is *only* ... which ...".

爲 before an adjective or verb tends to imply a comparison: "(Of all things) girls and servants are to be considered difficult to deal with", that is, "are the most difficult to deal with".

<sup>16</sup> Cf. I, ch. 8; above.

## 4. GOOD AND EVIL

We have seen that the Sung philosophers make no distinction between descriptive and normative principles.\* To do good is to follow principle, which is the Way; yet if we do wrong, there must be a principle to account for it. For example, Yi-ch'uān says:

"In general, since man has a separate body he has the principle of selfishness; it is natural that it is difficult to unite himself with the Way." (YS, 71/10)

If to do good is to follow principle, why is it wrong to follow the principle of selfishness? Although Ming-tao shares the same general assumptions, he is more aware than his brother of this kind of problem. His solution is that evil is following a principle too far or not far enough; and that it is itself a principle that, since the Yin and Yang in their alternation are sometimes harmonious and sometimes not, things will not always attain this mean.

"The good and evil in the world are both heaven's principle. What is called evil is not fundamentally evil; it is as it is only by going too far or not far enough – for example, the errors of Yang Chu and Mo-tzü." (YS, 14/10. Yang Chu failed to go beyond egoism; Mo-tzü carried altruism to the extreme of indiscriminate love.)

"The innumerable things all have opposites; there is an alternation of Yin and Yang, good and evil. When the Yang grows the Yin diminishes; when good increases evil is reduced. This principle, how far it can be extended! It is all men need to know." (YS, 136/1)

"In activities there is good and there is evil; both are heaven's principle. Within heaven's principle some things must be excellent and some bad; for 'it is inherent in things that they are unequal'.<sup>1</sup> We should look into this, but without ourselves entering into evil, degenerating into separate things." (YS, 17/5)

This inequality of things is explained in a saying which is too close to the preceding one in thought and phrasing not to be from the tongue of Ming-tao:

"The principles (*tao-li*) are all thus of themselves. If we could

\* p.29f

settle things by improvisation, what principles would there be? The mutations of heaven and earth, Yin and Yang, are like the grinding of two mill-stones. Ascent and descent, expansion and contraction, hard and soft, have succeeded each other from the first without interruption. The Yang constantly expands, the Yin constantly contracts, and therefore they are unequal—just as when the mill-stones move, their teeth are all uneven, and since they are uneven, produce innumerable variations. Therefore 'it is inherent in things that they are unequal'; Chuang-tzü made the unnatural demand that things should be regarded as equal, but things must be unequal." (YS, 33/11-13? accepting the variant for the first sentence. Cf. 32/3f?)

Ming-tao uses this idea to console himself for the death of his son:

"Movement and stillness are at the root of the Yang and Yin, and when the five ethers [the five elements]\* interact and revolve, the irregularity and inequality are all the greater. It is natural that among all kinds of living things, those in which they are confounded together are the majority, and it happens only occasionally that someone has them unadulterated. Since it is so difficult for this to happen even occasionally, it is also natural that sometimes the years of such a person's life cannot be many. Was not my son one of those who receive unadulterated ether but only a limited number of years? It is so by heaven's principle; what is there for me to say?"

(MTWC, 4/8B/11-13, cf. 3B/2-5)

By this argument Ming-tao would seem to be trying, not only to solve the contradiction in the idea of *li* which a modern European would deal with by distinguishing between descriptive and normative, but also to explain why one must do good and yet accept evil as part of the natural harmony. Opposites are necessary to each other; the Yin side of the world is to be accepted as the necessary complement of the Yang, and is not to be taken (as is done by the Buddhists) as a pretext for running away from the world. Just as we are often told that death must be accepted because life cannot be conceived without it,† so evil must be accepted because good cannot be conceived without it. The idea of the mutual dependence of opposites is for Ming-tao not merely an intellectual concept, but an insight which moves him intensely:

"Of the principles of heaven and earth and the innumerable things none is single, all must have opposites. All are as they are spontaneously, it is not that they have been planned. Each time I think of

\* p.33      † p.90f

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG MING-TAO

them at night, unconsciously my hands begin to dance to them, my feet begin to stamp them out." (YS, 133/6)

According to an unattributed saying:

"The sage is heaven and earth. Within heaven and earth, what thing is lacking? How should heaven and earth ever have the idea of distinguishing between good and bad? Everything is contained between heaven above and earth below; it is only that to deal with things there is the Way. If the sage kept near to the good and far from the bad, the things with which he had nothing to do would be many; how could he become heaven and earth? Therefore the purpose of the sage is merely to content the old, be faithful to his friends and nourish the young." (YS, 17/9f?)

Again,

"If you deal with things in relation to things, and not in relation to yourself, you have no self. It is this that is meant by saying that the decisions of the sage are not made in relation to himself; but the principle is perhaps not fully expressed in these words. Of the things produced by heaven, some are long and some short, some are great and some small; the gentleman gets the great, but how can the small also be made great? This is so by heaven's principle; how can one go against it? Although the world is so great and things are so many, it is enough that by dealing with them with a unified mind [that is, with integrity\*] one can be sure of grasping the essentials. So was not the way the ancients dealt with matters more than sufficient?"

(YS, 137/11-13)

Ming-tao explains the difference between men and "things" by saying that the ether of man is "correct" or "in equilibrium" (Yin and Yang being equally balanced) while that of things is "one-sided" (one exceeding the other):

"The principle of equilibrium is perfect. There is no production by the Yin alone nor by the Yang alone. That which leans to one side becomes an animal or bird or barbarian, while that which is in equilibrium becomes a man." (YS, 134/12)

"Within heaven and earth, it is not man alone who is perfectly intelligent; one's own mind is the mind of plants and trees, birds and animals. It is only that man receives at birth the balanced ether [literally 'the equilibrium'] of heaven and earth." One text adds: "Men and things differ only in having correct or one-sided ether.

\* p.67f

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

There is no completion by the Yin alone nor production by the Yang alone. Those which get ether leaning to the Yin side or Yang side become birds, animals, plants, trees, barbarians; those who receive correct ether are men." (YS, 4/7?)

As might be expected, Ming-tao puts no stress on the purity or impurity of the ether. Yi-ch'u'an's use of these terms is bound up with his dualism, the nature being distinct from the ether and obscured by its impurity. But since, as will be seen in the next chapter, Ming-tao identifies the nature and the ether, the purity of the ether does not have the same significance for him, and he is more interested in the equilibrium of Yin and Yang.

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> *Mencius*, L, 256/6.

## 5. MING-TAO ON THE NATURE

Ming-tao's view of the nature is quite different from his brother's; it is also much more difficult to understand. We may begin with a relatively lucid passage which expresses only what he has in common with Yi-ch'u'an. Speaking to his friend Han Wei, who inclined towards Buddhism, Ming-tao says:

"If you ascribe lying and deceit to having a bad nature, do you think you can look elsewhere for a good nature and exchange it for a bad one? The Way is the nature; it is wrong to look for the nature outside the Way or the Way outside the nature. The sages and worthies who discuss the innate virtue [literally 'heaven-virtue'] say that from the first the self is a naturally [literally 'thus by heaven'] complete and self-sufficient thing. If it is unpolluted, one should act directly according to it; if it is polluted to some extent, one should tend it by composure and restore it to its original state. The reason why it is possible to restore it to its original state is, as I said, that the basic material of the self is from the first a complete and sufficient thing." (YS, 1/1-3)

We have seen that during the early Sung the most popular theory of the nature was that which we have classed as (c) (ii)\*—that to follow the nature is good but the nature cannot itself be called good. It is not clear from the preceding quotation whether Ming-tao holds this or the closely related Mencian view that it is good. But the point is settled by a long unattributed passage, which contradicts Yi-ch'u'an's views so radically that it can only belong to Ming-tao:

"Inborn is what is meant by nature." The nature is the ether, the ether is the nature—that is, what is inborn. In the endowment of ether which men receive at birth there will in principle be both good and bad; but this does not mean that we are born with good and bad as two contrasting things present in the nature from the first. Some are good from infancy, some are bad from infancy; that they are so is due to their endowment of ether. [Note by the recording disciple Li Yü: 'Examples are the majestic impression made by Hou Chi

\* p.45

(even when he could only crawl on hands and knees) and the fact that as soon as Tzü Yüeh Chiao was born men knew that he would destroy the Jo-ao family.] The good is of course nature, but the bad must also be recognized as nature.

"Inborn is what is meant by nature." "What is still [i.e. not yet stimulated] at birth [is the nature given by heaven]."<sup>1</sup> Of what precedes this nothing can be said; as soon as we speak of nature it has already ceased to be the nature. Usually when people speak of the nature, they are only talking about 'What succeeds to [the Way] is goodness'<sup>2</sup>—for example, the statement of Mencius that the nature is good. What is meant by 'What succeeds it is goodness' is like 'the tendency of water to flow downwards'.<sup>3</sup> Whatever happens to it, it is still water. But some flows right to the sea without ever being polluted; this needs no labour to keep it clean. Some is certain to get progressively muddier before it has gone far; some gets muddy only after it has gone a long distance. Some has plenty of mud, some only a little; although the muddy water is different from the clean, it must still be recognized as water. This being so, it is necessary that man should accept the duty of cleansing and regulating it. The water will be cleaned quickly if his efforts are prompt and bold, slowly if they are careless. But when it is cleaned it is still only the original water; it is not that clean water has been fetched to replace the muddy, nor that the muddy has been taken away and put on one side. The cleanliness of the water corresponds to the goodness of the nature. Hence it is not that good and bad are two contrasting things within the nature which emerge separately.

"This principle is the decree of heaven. To follow it obediently is the Way. In following it, to cultivate it, so that each thing gets what is allotted for it, is education. From the decree of heaven to education, no intrusion of self can either add to or detract from the nature. This is the sage Shun 'possessing the Empire while remaining aloof from it'<sup>4</sup> [i.e. following objective principles without thinking of oneself]." (YS, 11/4-12<sup>5</sup> ascribed to Ming-tao in Chu Hsi's *Explanation of Ming-tao's Discussion of the Nature*<sup>6</sup>).

This passage presents a number of problems. In the first place it is stated explicitly at the beginning that the nature is the endowment of ether received at birth; but towards the end, in a paraphrase of the opening words of the *Doctrine of the Mean* ("The decree of heaven is

\* p.134f

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

what is meant by the nature; to follow the nature is what is meant by the Way; to cultivate the Way is what is meant by education."), we are told that "Principle is the decree of heaven". Chu Hsi naturally explains this difference, which in terms of his own dualist system is a contradiction, by saying that the former refers to the "physical nature" (*ch'i-chih chih hsing*),<sup>1</sup> and the latter to the nature proper. But although this distinction is made by Yi-ch'uan, there is no trace of it in the surviving sayings and writings of Ming-tao, and the present passage clearly excludes it. In any case, since Ming-tao is a monist, it is not a contradiction for him to say that the nature is both principle and ether. Before birth, when "nothing can be said" about it, there is only principle; at birth this assumes form to become the endowment of ether. Similarly, Chang Tsai says:

"The heaven-decreed nature is in man as the nature of water is in ice. Although there is a difference between the frozen and the melted, they are the same thing."<sup>2</sup>

There is a couple of other passages in which the nature is identified with the ether:

"A discussion of the nature without bringing in the ether would be incomplete; a discussion of the ether without bringing in the nature would not be clear", to which one text adds: "It is wrong to treat them as two". (YS, 88/13? ascribed to Ming-tao by Chu Hsi)

"The 'moral nature'<sup>3</sup> means what heaven confers, the innate [literally 'heaven's'] constitution. It is excellence of talent."

(YS, 20/10?)

The latter contradicts Yi-ch'uan's view† that the talent is ether and the ether is distinct from the nature. A similar explanation of the term "moral nature" is given in a passage directly attributed to Ming-tao:

"The 'moral nature' refers to what is valuable in the nature; it is really the same as referring to the goodness of the nature." (YS, 138/8)

Whenever Yi-ch'uan quotes Kao-tzü's "Inborn is what is meant by nature", he is always careful to make it clear that this applies to the endowment of ether, not to the nature proper.<sup>16</sup> Ming-tao, on the other hand, always quotes it without making qualifications.<sup>9</sup> One consequence of this difference is that the two Ch'éngs have different conceptions of the nature of non-human beings. For Yi-ch'uan the nature is the same in all things, although disguised in varying degrees

\* p.49      † pp.48-50

by the ether, while for Ming-tao each creature has its own nature and therefore its own manner of following the Way:

"To use oxen for carts and horses for chariots is to make use of each in accordance with its nature. Why not use oxen for chariots and horses for carts? It would be wrong in principle." (YS, 140/7, cf. 134/5)

"Kao-tzü is justified in saying that 'Inborn is what is meant by nature'. In all things produced between heaven and earth, [what is inborn] must be called nature. But although in all it may be called nature, within its scope it is none the less necessary to distinguish between the nature of an ox and the nature of a horse: Kao-tzü's error was to treat them as the same. It is not permissible to say with the Buddhists that 'Intelligence is present in the wriggling of a worm; all have the Buddha nature.'

"'The decree of heaven is what is meant by the nature; to follow the nature is what is meant by the Way' refers to what heaven sends down below. That in assuming form each of the innumerable things 'has its correct nature and decree'<sup>10</sup> is what is meant by nature: for them to accord unfailingly with their natures is what is meant by the Way. These points apply equally to men and to things. As for according with the nature, the horse acts on the horse's nature and not the ox's, the ox acts on the ox's nature and not the horse's — this is what is meant by 'following the nature'. Man is one of the innumerable things between heaven and earth; how should heaven distinguish between man and things?" (YS, 30/7-11?, cf. 59/6-8?)

What of the goodness of the nature? Before birth the nature is principle or the Way, and nothing can be said about it—which presumably means, not that it is inaccessible to observation, but that the word "good" cannot be applied to it. At birth it assumes form as the endowment of ether, which may deteriorate under external influence. The nature is therefore not unalterable; but it is always possible for a man to remove the evil in his nature and restore it to its original state. Thus the nature of the ordinary man is no longer solely good; but why does Ming-tao refuse to apply the word "good" even to the original nature?

Part of the answer is that thinkers of the early Sung did not agree as to whether the word "good" could be used of principle and the Way, or whether it should be confined to particular things and activities. The standard definition is derived from the *Great Appendix*:

"The Yin and Yang in alternation are what is called the Way. What

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ÉNG MING-TAO

succeeds it is goodness; that in which it is completed is the nature."<sup>11</sup>

What succeeds (*chi* 繼) the Way is goodness; does this obscure phrase imply that the Way itself cannot be called good? Su Shih (1036-1101), for example, held that it does:

"The Yin and Yang interacting produce things, the Way connecting with things produces good. When things are produced the Yin and Yang hide, when good is established the Way is no longer seen... Good is what succeeds the Way but cannot be identified with the Way."<sup>12</sup>

For Su Shih, as for the Ch'éngs, the nature is no longer merely the raw state of man; it is nothing less than the Way itself. But this elevation, which at first sight seems to confirm the Mencian view, actually makes it impossible for him to describe the nature as good. In the case of the Ch'éngs, Yi-ch'uan has no compunction about attributing goodness to principle<sup>13</sup> and therefore to the nature. But Ming-tao never describes either principle or the Way as good; on the contrary, as was shown in the last chapter, he derives evil as well as good from principle. If we compare

"The innumerable things all have opposites; there is an alternation of Yin and Yang, good and evil" (YS, 136/1)  
with

"This Way is not the opposite of anything, so that 'great' is inadequate to describe it" (YS, 16/13)

it seems clear that "good" as well as "great" must be inadequate to describe the Way. This is enough to account for Ming-tao's assumption that the question of goodness arises only in connexion with the ether.

In the second place, the position is complicated by Ming-tao's belief that evil as well as good is derived from principle, since evil is going too far or not far enough, and is due to the principle that the Yin and Yang ethers cannot remain equally balanced.\* It would seem to follow that even the corruption of the ether must be due to principles in the original nature; and this is confirmed by the statement that "In the endowment of ether which men receive at birth there will in principle be both good and bad". It also seems to follow that Ming-tao is not, like his brother, concerned with the purity or impurity of the endowment of ether, but with the equilibrium or disequilibrium of the Yin and Yang ethers within it. This point is not directly confirmed in the long passage just translated, which indeed

\* pp.127-30

does use the words "clean" and "muddy" (*ch'ing* 淸, *cho* 濁, elsewhere translated "pure" and "impure") of the water to which the nature is compared. However, since the water is described as having originally been clean, to suppose that the analogy is intended to cover this point would imply that all men are born with a perfect endowment of ether, which is expressly denied. In Ming-tao's eulogies on his son Ch'êng Tuan-ch'üeh and his friend Li Min-chih, the former of which was quoted in the last chapter,\* he compliments them on having received the Yin and Yang ethers unadulterated, whereas in the majority of men they are unevenly mixed.<sup>14</sup> The same view is expressed by the disciple Yang Shih, a monist who reduces everything to ether, whose doctrine of the nature is a combination of the teachings of both his masters:

"Q. What of the physical nature?"† of which Chang Tsai speaks?

"A. There are of course differences between the endowments of different men; but as for what lies at the root, it is altogether good. This is because 'the Yin and Yang in alternation are what is meant by the Way', and the Yin and Yang, which are altogether good, are what man receives at birth. However, while good is its normal state, there are also times when it is bad. To take an analogy, when a man receives at birth harmonious ether, he enjoys good health; when sickness comes it is due to disharmony in the ether. But disharmony in the ether is not its normal state; if you tend it and bring it to harmony you restore it to normal. The normal state is the nature; this is why Mencius says the nature is good. Chang Tsai spoke of the 'physical nature' only as we say of a man's nature that it is hard or soft, slack or energetic, strong or weak, dull or intelligent—which cannot be said of the nature received from heaven and earth.

"Now the cleanness of water is its normal state. When it is muddy, dirt has obscured it; once the dirt has been removed it is clean as before. Hence the attitude of the gentleman towards the 'physical nature' is that he must have the means to change it. Is not this the significance of 'when you clear away the mud the water is clean'?"<sup>15</sup>

\* p.128      † p.49

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Li chi*, Couvreur, 52/9f.

<sup>2</sup> *Great Appendix*, Sung, 280/2.

<sup>3</sup> *Mencius*, L, 396/1.

<sup>4</sup> *Analects*, L, 214/1.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CH'ENG MING-TAO

- <sup>1</sup> *Chu-tzü ta-ch'üan*, 67/16B-18A. Also CSL, 27-31.
- <sup>2</sup> CTCS, 41/14.
- <sup>3</sup> *Chu-tzü ta-ch'üan*, 44/19A/5, CSL, 75.
- <sup>4</sup> *Doctrine of the Mean*, L, 422/8. "Hence the gentleman respects his moral nature (*té hsing*) and follows inquiry and learning."
- <sup>5</sup> YS, 11/4, 6<sup>2</sup>, 30/7-13<sup>2</sup>, 133/1.
- <sup>6</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 3/5.
- <sup>7</sup> Sung, 280/1f.
- <sup>8</sup> *Su-shih Yi-chuan*, 159/13-160/6.
- <sup>9</sup> YS 318/9 343/2.
- <sup>10</sup> MTWC 4/3B/2-5, 8B/11-13.
- <sup>11</sup> *Kuei-shan yü-lu*, 3/21A/9-21B/10.
- <sup>12</sup> YS, 67/10, 229/3, 342/8f, 343/1.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX I  
WORKS OF THE CH'ÉNG BROTHERS

YS. *Ho-nan Chi'êng-shih yi-shu*

Preface by compiler Chu Hsi dated 1168.

Like many other great teachers, the Ch'êng brothers are known to us primarily by the sayings recorded by their disciples. During the sixty years after Yi-ch'u'an's death the original records of sayings circulated widely, were assembled in various incomplete collections, and were finally sorted out by Chu Hsi in two compilations, the *Yi-shu* and the *Wai-shu*. The conscientious scholarship of Chu Hsi has preserved for us much of the information which, in the case of such works as the *Synoptic Gospels* and the *Analects of Confucius*, can only be guessed at from internal evidence.

The *Yi-shu* consists of the twenty-eight original records of sayings known to Chu Hsi. In the table of contents he gives information concerning the compiler and date of every record for which he has been able to find it.<sup>1</sup> They are arranged as follows:

- ch. 1—10 Sayings of both brothers.
- 11—14 Sayings of Ming-tao
- 15 Sayings of Yi-ch'u'an (ascribed by some to Ming-tao). \*
- 16—24 Saying of Yi-ch'u'an.
- 25 Sayings of Yi-ch'u'an (partly spurious).

Supplement Documents relating to the Ch'êng brothers, including a "Year-table of Yi-ch'u'an" by Chu Hsi himself.

In chapters 3 and 10 the sayings of the two brothers are always distinguished; in the rest of the opening chapters they are sometimes distinguished but more often not. The small characters *Ming* 明 and *tsung-ch'êng* 宗丞 written after a saying indicate Ming-tao, *Chêng* 正 and *shih-chiang* 帚講, Yi-ch'u'an. (The former pair evidently stand for Ming-tao and Yi-ch'u'an's style *Chêng-shu*; the latter are their official titles.) The notes after many sayings are sometimes from the original records and sometimes additions of Chu Hsi; the latter are generally easy to distinguish since they are nearly always notes of textual variants.

Lü Ta-lin, the compiler of ch. 2, and the unknown compiler of

ch. 15, were originally disciples of Chang Tsai. There is reason to suspect that they may have allowed sayings of Chang Tsai to slip into their collections.<sup>2</sup>

Although the heading of ch. 15 mentions that some ascribe it to Ming-tao, in his note in the table of contents Chu Hsi takes it for granted that it belongs to Yi-ch'uan. There is clear internal evidence that he is right.<sup>3</sup>

Sayings attributed to Ming-tao or to Yi-ch'uan in later anthologies (such as the *Sung Yüan hsüeh-an* and the *Li-hsüeh tsung-ch'uan*) often turn out to be unattributed in the *Yi-shu* and *Wai-shu*—a fact of which modern scholars have not always taken account. Such attributions deserve no attention except in the case of the *Chin-ssü lu*, a collection of passages from earlier Neo-Confucians made by Chu Hsi and Lü Tsu-ch'ien. (The latters' postscript is dated 1175.) Since Chu Hsi was himself the compiler of the sayings of the Ch'êngs, he may in some cases have had independent evidence as to which of them was the speaker; and since he knew the work of the Ch'êngs more intimately than we can hope to do, was aware of stylistic differences between them,<sup>4</sup> and made no distinctions between their philosophies which could prejudice him, even a guess by Chu Hsi is of some interest. The section on the Ch'êngs in Forke's *Geschichte der neueren chinesischen Philosophie* unfortunately goes even further than the Chinese anthropologists in making unwarranted ascriptions. He deals with Ming-tao and Yi-ch'uan separately, without indicating whether the sayings he uses are ascribed to one rather than the other on external or on internal grounds. In fact nearly half of them are from sources which do not distinguish which brother is the speaker (*Ts'ui-yen*, *Hsing-li ching-yi*), the rest from sources which distinguish them only partially (*Yi-shu*, *Wai-shu*) or unreliably (*Sung Yüan hsüeh-an*, *Li-hsüeh tsung-ch'uan*). In view of the comprehensive scale of his work Forke is generally justified in using later anthologies; but in this case he is often forced to guess which is the speaker when the fact is accessible in the original source, and sometimes he guesses wrong.<sup>5</sup>

#### WS. *Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih wai-shu*

Preface by compiler Chu Hsi dated 1173.

This is a supplementary collection of sayings not in the original records of disciples assembled in the *Yi-shu*. Before the compilation of the *Yi-shu* there were already a number of general collections, some

by disciples or acquaintances of the Ch'êngs. Ch. 1-11 consists of sayings from these collections, the source of which Chu Hsi has been unable to trace. Ch. 12 contains otherwise unknown sayings and anecdotes quoted in other works, some of which are still extant.

MTWC. *Ming-tao wén-chi*

No preface.

YCWC. *Yi-ch'uan wén-chi*<sup>6</sup>

Preface by compiler Ch'êng Tuan-chung (Yi-ch'uan's son) dated 1112.

The literary writings of the Ch'êngs were first printed about the middle of the twelfth century by Liu Kung and Chang Shih, from a manuscript which had been in the possession of Hu An-kuo (1074-1138). The edition was strongly criticized by Chu Hsi for reproducing certain errors in the Hu copy. The original text was restored by T'an Shan-hsin, who also added a supplement (with a preface by himself dated 1323) containing a few previously overlooked writings of the Ch'êngs, as well as the documents relating to Chu Hsi's controversy over the text.

YC. *Yi-ch'uan Yi-chuan*

Preface by author Ch'êng Yi-ch'uan dated 1099.

The commentary on the *Book of Changes* is the only full-length work written in person by either of the Ch'êngs. The manuscript, which was still in a confused state at Yi-ch'uan's death, was edited during the Ch'êng-ho period (1111-1117) by his disciple Yang Shih, whose postscript is preserved in his collected works.<sup>7</sup> The commentary covers the whole of the classic and those appendices which are scattered over it in the "modern text", but not the five appendices which follow it. According to his disciple Yin T'un, Yi-ch'uan said that it was unnecessary to write on the *Great Appendix* since this is itself a commentary from the hand of a sage.<sup>8</sup> The *Ching-shuo* contains a series of notes on the *Great Appendix*, but, like most of the *Ching-shuo*, these were no doubt written down by disciples. The *Yi-chuan* is less useful than the *Yi-shu* for the study of the Ch'êng brothers' philosophy; for Yi-ch'uan, following his teacher Hu Yüan,<sup>9</sup> reacted against the use of the *Book of Changes* as a basis for speculation and preferred to treat the hexagrams as a series of sixty-four moral lessons. A postscript by Chu Hsi praises him as the first

commentator since the Han to interpret the *Book of Changes* in terms of moral principle rather than mystic numbers.<sup>9</sup>

Most editions of the commentary are preceded by Yi-ch'uan's *Preface to the Commentary* and by two anonymous documents, the *Preface to the Changes* and *The Meaning of the Two Parts*. It has generally been assumed that these were also written by Yi-ch'uan. The *Preface to the Changes* is of great importance since it contains the only reference in the collected writings of the Ch'êngs to the Supreme Ultimate and also to the "ultimate of nothing", the latter an even more convincing proof of the influence of Chou Tun-yi's *Supreme Ultimate Chart*:

"Therefore 'in the Changes there is the Supreme Ultimate, which produces the two types.'<sup>10</sup> The Supreme Ultimate is the Way; the two types are the Yin and Yang. The Yin and Yang are the one Way; the Supreme Ultimate is the ultimate of nothing."

Several modern scholars have used this as evidence that the Ch'êngs were affected by the ideas of Chou Tun-yi.<sup>11</sup> But it is unlikely that the anonymous prefaces are the work of Yi-ch'uan. Both of them are absent from the earliest available text, the edition of 1349 (*Fu Yüan Chih-chêng pên Yi Ch'êng chuan*), which does contain the *Preface to the Commentary*. In the literary writings of Yi-ch'uan only the *Preface to the Commentary* is contained in the original collection,<sup>12</sup> while the other two are in the supplement added in 1323.<sup>13</sup> In the sections of the *Yü-lei* and *Chin-ssü lu* on Yi-ch'uan's commentary Chu Hsi discusses only the *Preface to the Commentary*.<sup>14</sup> Disciples of the Ch'êngs more than once refer to the *Preface to the Commentary* as the *Preface* or the *Preface to the Changes*, as though they did not know of anything with the latter title with which it could be confused.<sup>15</sup> The reference to the Supreme Ultimate and the "ultimate of nothing" are in themselves strong evidence that Yi-ch'uan is not the author. Chu Hsi admitted that "the two Ch'êngs did not speak of the Supreme Ultimate"; in his controversy with Lu Chiu-yüan the latter used the argument that "the discussions and writings of the two Ch'êngs are very numerous, but they never once referred to the ultimate of nothing", and Chu Hsi did not take him up on this point; when Chang Shih wrote to him that the Ch'êngs "frequently mention the *West Inscription* but never say a word about the *Supreme Ultimate Chart*", Chu Hsi did not deny it but merely replied that none of their disciples was worthy to receive such profound teaching.<sup>16</sup> It is

## APPENDICES

impossible to believe that at this period both terms were used in the opening pages of Yi-ch'uan's only full-length work.

### CS.. Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih ching-shuo

No preface.

Yi-ch'uan wrote the commentary on the *Changes* himself, but his explanations of the rest of the classics were written up by his disciples.<sup>17</sup> An apparent exception is the commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*; not being satisfied with the commentary written for him by his disciple Liu Hsüan, Yi-ch'uan wrote another himself which did not go further than Duke Min.<sup>18</sup> The current text breaks off still earlier, at the ninth year of Duke Huan,<sup>19</sup> and is the only work in the collection with a preface by Yi-ch'uan (dated 1103).

The section on the *Li-chi* consists of two versions of the text of the *Great Learning*, as rearranged by Ming-tao and Yi-ch'uan respectively; both differ from that made by Chu Hsi. The former is the only genuine work of Ming-tao in the collection.

The *Interpretation of the Doctrine of the Mean* which concludes the *Ching-shuo* was also circulating in the twelfth century as the work of Ming-tao.<sup>20</sup> But Yin T'un, a disciple of the Ch'êngs, and later Hu Hung and Chu Hsi, noticed that it was merely a shorter version of a commentary on the *Doctrine of the Mean* by the Ch'êng disciple Lü Ta-lin.<sup>21</sup> Although Lü Ta-lin's commentary is lost, there are a number of quotations in the *Chung-yung chi-lüeh*, many of which are identical with passages in the *Ching-shuo*.

### TY. Ho-nan Ch'êng-shih ts'ui-yen

Preface ascribed to Chang Shih dated 1166.

This is a short collection of sayings and writings, rephrased in literary language and introduced in each case by "The Master said". When compared with the originals they prove to be considerably altered and abridged, even in the case of writings which were originally in literary language; the editor has even been capable of conflating sayings which are not even from the same brother.<sup>22</sup> It is therefore unsafe to use the *Ts'ui-yen* as a primary source, although it is sometimes useful to see how an obscure saying has been rewritten, especially since quotations on which the meaning depends are often supplied.

According to the author of the preface, the work is based on the

*Book of the Master of Ho-nan* (河南夫子書), a collection of Yi-ch'uan's sayings put into literary language. He received it from a certain Tzü-Kao-tzü (whose family believed that it was compiled by the Ch'êngs' disciple Yang Shih), and himself rearranged it according to subject to make the present work. He adds that it also contains some of the sayings and acts of Ming-tao, apparently assuming that anything not directly attributed to him is from the "Master of Honan" Yi-ch'uan; but in fact many of the unattributed sayings have parallels in the *Yi-shu* ascribed to Ming-tao. If the preface were really written by Chang Shih in 1166, this collection would be actually two years older than the *Yi-shu*.

The *Ts'ui-yen* was omitted from the collections of the writings of the Ch'êngs printed in 1461 and 1498; it was first included in Hsü Pi-ta's edition of 1606.<sup>23</sup> The work is twice recorded in the *Ssü-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu*, first as the *Èrh Ch'êng ts'ui-yen* compiled by Yang Shih, and again as the *Yi-ch'uan ts'ui-yen* prefaced by Chang Shih.<sup>24</sup> In spite of this duplication it is clear that both entries refer to the same book. The former expresses no doubts, but the latter questions Chang Shih's authorship of the preface, observing that it is not included in his collected writings and that in 1358 Sung Lien described the preface, which he quoted verbatim, as anonymous but traditionally ascribed to Chang Shih.<sup>25</sup> It seems clear that the signature and date are later additions. It may be added that the statement that "according to the tradition of the (Kao) family this book was compiled by Yang Shih" suggests that the author was not even professing to be writing as early as 1166, only thirty-one years after Yang Shih's death. Further, Chang Shih's friend Chu Hsi uses the *Ts'ui-yen* neither in the *Wai-shu* nor in the *Chin-ssü lu*, and one of his replies to a disciple shows that he was not acquainted with any collection classified by subject. (The reference to the *Yi-shu* implies that it is later than 1168):

"Q. I should like to take the most important sayings in the *Yi-shu* and arrange them according to subject, so that any one saying is explained by those which precede and follow it and they can be easily co-ordinated. What is your opinion?

"A. By all means do it if you can. But I am afraid that those on benevolence also refer to duty and those on the nature also refer to the decree. It will be difficult to classify them."<sup>26</sup>

The tradition mentioned in the preface that the *Book of the Master*

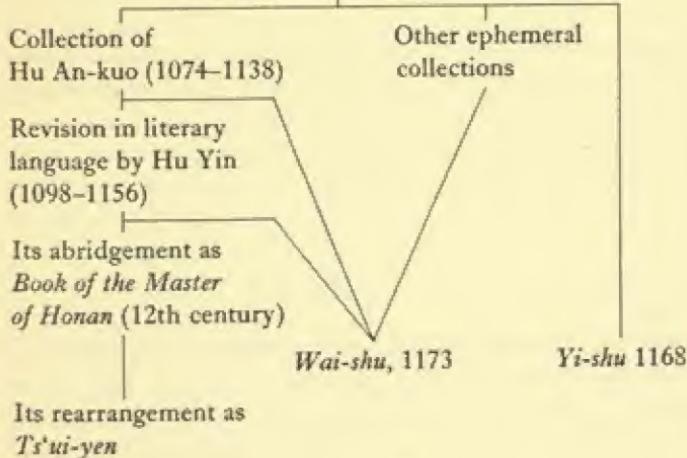
of Honan was compiled by Yang Shih is also unacceptable. The Ming scholar Yang Lien (whose observations, although they attracted attention in Korea and Japan, have unfortunately passed unnoticed in China) called attention to a saying of Chu Hsi which shows that this book was merely an abridgement of a collection by Hu Yin (1098–1156):

"Hu Yin put Yi-ch'uan's sayings into literary language and made them into a book, completing it in five days. The *Book of the Master of Honan* now current is an abridgement of this."<sup>27</sup>

In the *Wai-shu*, for which Chu Hsi used every general collection known to him, there is no reference to any made by Yang Shih. But in ch. 7, as a supplement to his extracts from the manuscript possessed by Hu Yin's father An-kuo, Chu Hsi gives four extracts from what is evidently Hu Yin's book. It is described in the table of contents as "another copy which puts the sayings into literary language and introduces each section by 'The Master said' ". Two of the four extracts are actually to be found in the present *Ts'ui-yen*,<sup>28</sup> the absence of the others is explained by the fact that the *Book of the Master of Honan*, on which the *Ts'ui-yen* is based, was an abridgement of Hu Yin's work.

Hu Yin's source was no doubt his father's large collection of sayings and writings of the Ch'êngs, constantly referred to as the "Hu copy".<sup>29</sup> The relation between the *Ts'ui-yen* and the *Yi-shu* and *Wai-shu* may therefore be explained provisionally as follows:

Disciples' records of sayings (1077–1107)



ECCS. *Erh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu*

During the Ch'un-yu period (1241-52) the *Yi-shu*, *Wai-shu*, *Ching-shuo* and *Wên-chi* were printed by Chang Ch'i as separate books each with its own table of contents, under the title *Ch'êng-shih ssü-shu* 程氏四書.<sup>30</sup>

In 1461 these four works, together with T'an Shan-hsin's supplement to the *Wên-chi*, were printed as a single book bearing for the first time the title *Erh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu*, edited by Yen Yü-hsi, with a preface by Li Wén-ta.<sup>31</sup>

Since 1461 there have been three important editions of the *Erh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu*:

(i) The same four books edited by K'ang Shao-tsung, with a preface by Li Han and postscripts by P'êng Kang and Ch'êng Hsüan. (The prefaces and postscripts are all dated 1498.)

(ii) The same four books with the addition of the *Yi-chuan* and *Ts'ui-yen*, edited by Hsü Pi-ta, with prefaces by Hsü Pi-ta (dated 1606) and by someone with the surname Yeh 葉.

(iii) The Pao-kao t'ang edition, K'ang-hsi period (1662-1722), not seen. The Hsing-sha edition which is based on it includes all six books, prefaced only by the *Ssü-k'u ch'üan-shu t'i-yao* notes on the separate books.

Since 1606 the *Erh Ch'êng ch'üan-shu* has contained all the extant writings of the Ch'êng brothers. Its right to be called *ch'üan-shu* ("complete works") is thus better than that of many other collections so called, including the *Chang-tzü ch'üan-shu* and the *Chu-tzü ch'üan-shu*.

Most modern editions of the Sung philosophers are based on the *Chêng yi t'ang ch'üan-shu*, a series of Neo-Confucian works edited by Chang Po-hsing between 1707 and 1713. Except for the shortest works, these texts are abridged; the popularity of the collection has indeed had the unfortunate effect of practically driving some of the complete texts out of circulation. The Ch'êng brothers are represented by:

*Erh Ch'êng yü-lu*, a selection from the *Yi-shu* and *Wai-shu*.

*Erh Ch'êng wên-chi*, a selection of the literary writings.

*Erh Ch'êng ts'ui-yen*.

Except for the *Basic Sinological Series* edition of the *Yi-shu* (an excellent text the source of which is unfortunately not given), all the reprints of works of the Ch'êngs in the *Basic Sinological Series* and the *Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'êng* are based on the *Chêng yi t'ang ch'üan-shu*.

## APPENDICES

There are no annotated editions. But there are a number of commentaries on the *Chin-ssü lu*, in which the Ch'êng brothers are well represented; the *Sentetsu Icho Kanseki Kokujikai Zensho* edition, with Kambun text and Japanese commentary, was found especially useful in preparing the present study. A German translation by O. Graf appeared in 1953.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Yi-shu*, ch. 25 is also found, without any reference to Yi-ch'uan, in the *Ch'ao-shih k'o-yü* (27A-42B) of Ch'ao Yüeh-chih.

Some comments by Chu Hsi on the reliability of the records of different disciples are collected in YL, 97/1A-3B.

See also Ts'ai, whose study of the works of the Ch'êngs (25-61, 265-286) is the most detailed yet attempted.

<sup>2</sup> I have noticed six sayings in the *Yi-shu* which are elsewhere ascribed to Chang Tsai, and a thorough search would no doubt bring to light others.

YS, 36/4f	CTCS 92/6f
58/7-9	128/11-13
59/9-11	117/10-12 <i>Chang-tzü yü-lu</i> A, 11B/6-12A/4
160/3f	CTCS 235/1f
269/12, 270/5	<i>Chang-tzü yü-lu</i> B, 9A/1-3, A, 3A/9f

The first three sayings in the *Yi-shu* are from ch. 2, the fourth from ch. 15. The last two are from the eight sayings at the end of ch. 18, which were absent from the original manuscript (Chu Hsi's note, YS, 269/6).

There is also at least one saying in the *Wai-shu* which is elsewhere ascribed to Chang Tsai:

WS, 11/1A/1-3	<i>Chang-tzü yü-lu</i> A, 11A/8-12B/2.
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<sup>3</sup> One saying in YS, ch. 15 (178/12) is later quoted as Yi-ch'uan's (YS, 220/8). The views in ch. 15 on the relation between the Way and the Yin and Yang (see the chapter on "Monism and Dualism" above) are those of Yi-ch'uan (YS, 177/6-8, 179/8).

There are two sentences in *Mencius* which are differently punctuated by the two brothers. In L, 190/1f 至大至剛，以直養而無害 Yi-ch'uan put the stop after 直. In L, 190/8f 勿正，心勿忘 Ming-tao put the stop after 心. (See YS, 12/11f, 276/4-9, YCWC, 5/4B/11f, *Kuei-shan yü-lu*, 4/15A/7-15B/7.) This difference often provides a useful criterion for distinguishing which brother is the speaker in unattributed passages. For examples of Ming-tao's punctuation, see YS 12/2?, 28/5n?, 63/1, 85/5?, 7?, 89/7?, 118/5?; for Yi-ch'uan's, YS, 12/7?, 276/4, 315/9, YC, 1/9B/13. In ch. 15 the punctuation is Yi-ch'uan's (159/4, 182/7, 187/11).

Ts'ai (36) also concludes that ch. 15 is rightly allotted to Yi-ch'uan, and gives reasons for suspecting that the sayings were recorded simultaneously by several hands, and the overlapping records afterwards collated.

<sup>4</sup> YL, 93/8AB.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the following sayings which Forke ascribes to Ming-tao are in fact Yi-ch'uan's:

Forke 74 n1	TY, 2/4A/5	YS, 248/9f
76 n6	2/27B/4	68/10
80 n3		318/8

TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

<sup>6</sup> *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Yin Ho-ching chi*, 14/3f.

<sup>8</sup> *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 1/17A, SKCSTM, 2/2B.

<sup>9</sup> *Chu-tzü ta-ch'üan*, 81/18AB.

<sup>10</sup> *Changes*, Sung, 299/1.

<sup>11</sup> Ch'êng Chung-fan, 43. Gotô, "Ch'êngs", 74-5. "Chu Hsi", 157. Kuan Tao-chung, 36. The only scholar known to me who questions the evidence of the preface is Ts'ai (76), who observes that "The terminology and phraseology in the preface sound so unlike those of Ch'êng I that it is extremely doubtful if it can have been written by him at all."

<sup>12</sup> The title of the *Preface to the Commentary* is in the table of contents for YCWC, ch. 4, in Hsü Pi-ta's ECCS, with the note "See the *Yi chuan*". In modern editions of the ECCS even the title is omitted.

<sup>13</sup> WC Supplement, 1A/9f. The note on the *Preface to the Changes* is: "See the *Hsing-li ch'üan-shu*. Already included in the *Yi-chuan*." It is in fact found in the thirteenth century *Hsing-li ch'üan-shu chü-chieh*, ch. 5, where it is ascribed to Yi-ch'üan in the table of contents although not in the text.

<sup>14</sup> YL, 67/5A-9B (9A/4-9B/9 on the *Preface to the Commentary*), CSL, 155-164 (*Preface to the Commentary* reproduced 155B-159A).

<sup>15</sup> *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 61/11, WS, 12/14B/10.

<sup>16</sup> YL, 93/8B/3; CLHC, 34/3, 28/11-29/1.

<sup>17</sup> YS, 263/8f. *Yin Ho-ching chi*, 14/15-15/4. *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 1/25B, 2/4B, 4/3B.

<sup>18</sup> YS, 194/2, WS, 12/10A/6-10, 12B/10-12.

<sup>19</sup> CS, 4/16A/11, cf. WC Supplement, 13B/7.

<sup>20</sup> *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 2/9A.

<sup>21</sup> CS, 8/10A/12-10B/2. *Yin Ho-ching chi* (complete), 8/4B/5-8. *Wu-fêng chi*, 3/48B-50B. YL, 62/6B/3f, 97/15B/10-16A/5. *Chu-tzü ta-ch'üan*, 75/26B-28A.

<sup>22</sup> For example, TY, 1/7A/12-7B/1 is a combination of YS, 149/6 (Ming-tao) and 238/2f (Yi-ch'üan).

<sup>23</sup> Hsü Pi-ta's ECCS, Preface, 10A/6-10B/3.

<sup>24</sup> SKCSTM, 92/8B, 95/13B.

<sup>25</sup> *Sung Lien chu tsü pien*, 46.

<sup>26</sup> YL, 97/3A/1-3.

<sup>27</sup> YL, 97/2B/12f. The writings of Yang Lien are inaccessible to me; but his opinion is mentioned by the Korean Li Huang (1501-1572), who also anticipates the doubts of the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* editors about the preface:

"According to Chang Shih's preface, this book was brought out by Yang Shih, but Yang Lien suspected that it is Hu Yin's book. Considering the matter further, if Yang Shih was really responsible for the book, and Chang Shih rearranged it by subject as he is supposed to have done, why is it that there is not a word about it in the treatises of the school of Chu Hsi? The absence of the preface from the collected writings of Chang Shih makes it still more likely that Yang Lien was right." (*T'u-i-hsi chi*, 43/142f)

The suspicions of Yang Lien and Li Huang are also mentioned with approval by the Japanese Yamazaki Ansai (1618-1682), *Yamazaki Ansai zenshû*, 2/735.

<sup>28</sup> WS, 7/4B/3f TY, 2/21A/4f

/5f 2/10A/12

In the former case Chu Hsi mentions that he includes the extract because it contains seven words lacking in the version in YCWC, 7/3B/3; these words are found in the *T'u-i-yen* parallel.

## APPENDICES

Ts'ai (61), although unaware of Chu Hsi's reference to the collection of Hu Yin, notices the possibility of a connexion between the *Ts'ui-yen* and the copy used in the *Wai-shu*, but rejects it on the grounds that since the *Wai-shu* gives only four extracts from the latter it must have been much shorter than the *Ts'ui-yen*. However, the great majority of sayings in the *Ts'ui-yen* have parallels in the *Yi-shu* and *Wai-shu*, so that Chu Hsi would have had no occasion to use them.

<sup>19</sup> YS Contents (on ch. 21B, 26), WS Contents (on ch. 7), YCWC Contents 1A-6A, Supplement 6A-13B, CS, 3/1A/2n.

<sup>20</sup> ECCS (1498 edition), Li Han's preface and P'êng Kang's postscript.

<sup>21</sup> ECCS (1498 edition), Li Han's preface. Yang Chia-lo, 1010/0.

## APPENDIX II

### CHOU TUN-YI AND THE BEGINNINGS OF NEO-CONFUCIANISM

It has been generally accepted for nearly eight hundred years that the Neo-Confucian school was founded by Chou Tun-yi (1017–1073); that his philosophy was handed on to the Ch'êng brothers, who studied under him in 1046–7; that it passed from them to Chang Tsai, who met them at the capital in 1057, and to Shao Yung (1011–1077), who was acquainted with them at Loyang; and that after being spread over China in adulterated forms by disciples of the Ch'êngs, it was finally restored and completed by Chu Hsi (1130–1200). This traditional picture is derived from Chu Hsi's collection of the biographies of his predecessors, the *Yi Lo yüan-yüan lu*. Modern scholars, although questioning certain points, continue to assume that Chou Tun-yi was the founder of the Sung school and that its development followed a straight line from him through the Ch'êngs to Chu Hsi; even so recent a writer as Fêng Yu-lan tries to show that Chu Hsi's central ideas are all implicit in Chou Tun-yi's works.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the culminating thinker in a movement cannot be trusted to write its history; he is likely to estimate his predecessors according to their utility to himself, and to assume that they are historically related as their ideas are related in his own mind. Chu Hsi's presentation of the early history of the movement deserves the kind of criticism which has long been given to his interpretation of the classics.

The most convenient point at which to begin is the position of Shao Yung, who in the traditional scheme is balanced precariously on the edge of the Neo-Confucian school. Chu Hsi did not consider him worthy of inclusion in his anthology of the sayings and writings of his predecessors, the *Chin-ssü lu*. His life is included in the *Yi Lo yüan-yüan lu*, but immediately after those of the Ch'êngs, giving the impression that, in spite of the fact that he was six years older than Chou Tun-yi himself, Chu Hsi considered that everything valuable in his teaching was derived from them. But Shao Yung's main work was concerned with charts and numerical calculations based on the *Book of Changes*, to which the Ch'êngs were indifferent and Chu Hsi attached only a limited importance; and it has never been a secret that

he derived them from a school which was much older than the Ch'êng school and independent of it. According to the epitaph written by Ming-tao, Shao Yung's learning was derived from Li Chih-ts'ai, who derived it from Mu Hsiu; "when traced to its source the tradition goes a long way back."<sup>2</sup> Shao Yung's son Po-wén stated that the science of numbers was transmitted from Ch'êng T'u'an (a Taoist who died in 989) to Mu Hsiu, and from him through Li Chih-ts'ai to his father.<sup>3</sup> There are several poems of Shao Yung which reveal his admiration for Ch'êng T'u'an,<sup>4</sup> so that Ming-tao's failure to mention his Taoist predecessor is no doubt due to politeness to the deceased, whose orthodoxy he is careful to stress. After Shao Yung's death his work was carried on by his son Po-wén and grandson Po, whose writings often reflect the rivalry between the Shao and Ch'êng schools.<sup>5</sup>

There is no evidence that Shao Yung was ever acquainted with Chou Tun-yi, but, as we shall see, these two are closer to each other in their basic assumptions than either of them is to the Ch'êngs and Chang Tsai. This ceases to be surprising when it is realized that during the eleventh century there was a school of thinkers interested in the cosmology of the *Book of Changes* but for the most part unconnected with the Confucian revival, and that the only reason why these two were distinguished from the rest as "Neo-Confucians" is that they were the ones who influenced Chu Hsi. The cosmology illustrated in the various charts circulating during this period was based on a passage in the *Great Appendix* of the *Book of Changes*:

"Therefore in the Changes there is the Supreme Ultimate (*t'ai-chi* 太極), which produces the two types. The two types produce the four images, and these produce the eight trigrams."<sup>6</sup>

This passage refers primarily to the construction of the diagrams used in divination. The two types (— and —) are put together in four ways to make the four images (= = = =) and in eight to make the eight trigrams (≡, etc.) which are combined to make the sixty-four hexagrams (䷀, etc.) But if the diagrams enable us to predict the future, their construction must correspond to the principles followed by heaven and earth; and since in divination the lines of the hexagrams are fixed by counting yarrow-stalks, number must in some way lie at the basis of the universe—a conclusion similar to that which the Pythagoreans are supposed to have drawn from the study of musical intervals. The passage in the *Great Appendix* was therefore assumed to describe the evolution of the universe from the Supreme Ultimate,

the two types corresponding to the Yin and Yang and the four images to the five elements. (It had long been the custom to omit earth when relating the elements to schemes of four such as the seasons.)

Shao Yung says:

"When the Supreme Ultimate divides, the two types are in position. By the interaction of the Yang descending and Yin ascending, the four images are produced. The interaction of Yin and Yang produces the four images of heaven, the interaction of hard and soft produces the four images of earth; then the eight trigrams are complete. After the eight trigrams are mixed together, the innumerable things are produced from them. Therefore

- 1 divides into 2,
- 2 into 4,
- 4 into 8,
- 8 into 16,
- 16 into 32,
- 32 into 64."<sup>7</sup>

The Supreme Ultimate is present within man as his mind and as his nature. It is unmoving but *shên* 神, generally translated "spirit",<sup>8</sup> but implying for the Sung thinkers not a personal spirit but an impersonal power and intelligence which is active in things without movement in space. *Shên* produces number, which produces the pre-existent images (*hsiang* 象) of things. The images assume form as instruments (concrete things):

"The mind is the Supreme Ultimate."

"The Supreme Ultimate is one, unmoving. It produces two; when there are two there is *shên*."

"*Shên* produces number, number images, images instruments."

"The Supreme Ultimate, unmoving, is the nature. When it emits there is *shên*, when *shên* number, when number images, when images instruments."

"The Preceding Heaven learning is a training of the mind; therefore the charts are all developed from the centre. The innumerable transformations and activities are born in the mind."<sup>9</sup>

Even during the Sung there were no philosophical writings of undisputed authenticity ascribed to the three predecessors of Shao Yung. Ch'ao Yüeh-chih, a late member of the Shao school, wrote in

1107 that before Shao Yung "from Ch'én T'uan down none had ever written a book".<sup>10</sup> There was, however, a *Record of the Dragon Chart* (*Lung-t'u chi* 龍圖記) ascribed to Ch'én T'uan, fragments of which survive. Its genuineness was questioned, from motives which do not seem to have been entirely disinterested, but in any case it was not written later than the middle of the eleventh century.<sup>11</sup> Its charts were based on the statement of the *Great Appendix* that the odd numbers up to ten belong to heaven and the even to earth,<sup>12</sup> and illustrated the evolution of the "innumerable things" by the interaction of heaven and earth. Since the first was entitled "The numbers of the *Dragon Chart* before heaven and earth have joined", the work evidently ignored the production of the two types from the Supreme Ultimate.<sup>13</sup>

The most important exponent of charts and numbers before Shao Yung was Liu Mu, whose work was presented to the Emperor early in the Ch'ing-li period (1041-8).<sup>14</sup> According to a tradition which apparently originated in the Shao school, he was the disciple of Fan O-ch'ang, who wrote a work on the *Book of Changes*, no longer extant, in the T'ien-hsi period (1017-21), and whose learning was also supposed to have been derived ultimately from the Taoist Ch'én T'uan.<sup>15</sup>

Liu Mu says:

"By the Changes is meant the interaction of the Yin and Yang ethers. Until the Yin and Yang interact, the four images are not in position; before the eight trigrams divide, from whence could the innumerable things be produced? Therefore the two types in mutation produce the four images, and the four images in mutation produce the eight trigrams. When these are doubled (that is, when the three lines of the diagram become six) to make the sixty-four hexagrams, the possibilities of the world are completed. The diagrams were provided by the sages to observe the images. The images are responses above the level of form. Ultimately forms are produced from images, images are provided from numbers. If the numbers are ignored, there is no means of seeing the origin of the four images."<sup>16</sup>

According to Liu Mu, the Supreme Ultimate is the original undivided ether (*ch'i*) and has no number or diagram. It divides into light, pure, round ether (corresponding to the odd numbers of heaven, 1 and 3) and heavy, impure, square ether (the even numbers of earth, 2 and 4). These are the images of heaven and earth, still above

the level of form. But combining with 5, the "ether of equilibrium and harmony",

- 1 produces 6, water
- 2     ,     7, fire
- 3     ,     8, wood
- 4     ,     9, metal,

while 5 doubles itself to become 10, earth. With the appearance of the five elements, the world of concrete forms comes into existence.

Unlike Shao Yung and Liu Mu, Chou Tun-yi was not known as a philosopher in the eleventh century. In 1134, almost as soon as his writings had been put in circulation by disciples of the Ch'êngs, Chu Chén fitted him into the pedigree of the Shao Yung by asserting that he received his *Supreme Ultimate Chart* from Mu Hsiu, who got it from a disciple of Ch'én T'uán.<sup>17</sup> Mu Hsiu died in 1032, when Chou Tun-yi was only 16 by the Chinese reckoning—which is at any rate more than the age of Yi-ch'uán when he studied under Chou Tun-yi; since they were both in the capital in 1031–2 Chu Chén's claim is just credible although very unlikely.<sup>18</sup> But in any case there can be no doubt that, although none of his few surviving writings are concerned with numbers, Chou Tun-yi shares the general assumptions which distinguish Shao Yung and Liu Mu from the later Sung philosophers. His *Explanation of the Supreme Ultimate Chart* begins:

"It is the ultimate of nothing<sup>19</sup> which is the Supreme Ultimate. The Supreme Ultimate moving produces the Yang, and at the ultimate of movement becomes still. Becoming still, it produces the Yin, and at the ultimate of stillness again moves. Movement and stillness alternate, each at the root of the other. With the separation of Yin and Yang, the two types are in position. The Yang changing and the Yin according with it produce water, fire, wood, metal, and earth."<sup>20</sup>

What is the relation of the Ch'êngs and Chang Tsai to these earlier thinkers? The view that the teaching of the Loyang and Kuanchung schools originated with Chou Tun-yi is not found until the middle of the twelfth century; earlier writers assumed either that it went back to Ch'én T'uán or, more commonly, that it began with the Ch'êngs themselves. The former view is found in the memorial in which Chu Chén presented his commentary on the *Book of Changes* after its completion in 1134. After saying that from the Wei dynasty Confucians were prejudiced against the speculative approach to the *Book*

*of Changes* by the Taoist interpretations of Wang Pi and Chung Hui, Chu Chén continues:

"From this time the way of heaven and the way of man were rent apart and were not reunited for over seven hundred years. But after the glorious rise of the present dynasty, exceptional people appeared from time to time. The *Preceding Heaven Chart* was transmitted

from Ch'én T'u'an of P'u-shang to Ch'ung Fang	
from Fang	to Mu Hsiu,
from Hsiu	to Li Chih-ts'ai,
from Chih-ts'ai	to Shao Yung.

The *River Chart* and the *Lo Writing* were transmitted

from Ch'ung Fang	to Li Kai,
from Kai	to Hsü Chien,
from Chien	to Fan O-ch'ang,
from O-ch'ang	to Liu Mu.

The *Supreme Ultimate Chart* was transmitted

from Mu Hsiu	to Chou Tun-yi
from Tun-yi	to Ch'eng Yi and Ch'eng Hao.

At this time Chang Tsai was teaching in association with the two Ch'êngs and Shao Yung. In consequence,

Shao Yung wrote the *Huang-chi ching-shih*,

Liu Mu expounded the fifty-five numbers of heaven and earth,

Chou Tun-yi wrote the *T'ung-shu*,

Ch'eng Yi wrote the *Commentary on the Changes*,  
and Chang Tsai wrote such essays as *The Supreme Harmony* and *The Three and the Two*."<sup>21</sup>

A similar view seems to be implied in Chu Kuang-t'ing's recommendation of Yi-ch'u'an to the Emperor a little before 1086:

"In the time of the Imperial ancestors Ch'én T'u'an and Ch'ung Fang were offered appointments. Their high reputation and simplicity of life were known to the whole world; but I consider that Ch'êng Yi's worth is not necessarily less than theirs, and that some of his teaching is in advance of that of T'u'an and Fang."<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand the view that the Ch'êngs were the founders of a new movement is found in a memorial presented by Hu An-kuo soon after 1132. In this he requests that services of the Ch'êngs, Shao Yung and Chang Tsai to the Confucian revival should be rewarded by posthumous titles and official patronage of their works. There is no

reference to Ch'ênn T'u'an, Liu Mu or even Chou Tun-yi; on the contrary he says:

"It is long since the way of Confucius and Mencius ceased to be handed down. Since the Ch'êng brothers *for the first time* brought it to light, it has been possible to learn their way and attain to it."<sup>23</sup>

As late as 1151 Kuo Yung, whose father Chung-hsiao had studied under the Ch'êngs, wrote in the preface to his commentary on the *Changes*:

"From the Han dynasty onwards scholars were for the most part interested only in profit and salary, and high office was the only ambition of graduates. Certainly one cannot expect to learn anything from them about the way of the sages. More than a century after the rise of the Sung appeared the Ch'êng brothers Ming-tao and Yi-ch'u'an, from whom Chang Tsai derived. These looked into the corruption of their predecessors and fought against the profit-hunting scholarship of the past thousand years, *going directly to the sages for their teachers.*"<sup>24</sup>

This is also the way in which the Ch'êngs regarded themselves and Chang Tsai. Yi-ch'u'an wrote in his epitaph on Ming-tao:

"After the death of the Duke of Chou the way of the sages was not applied; after the death of Mencius the learning of the sages was not transmitted. Since the way was not applied, for a hundred generations there was no good government; since the learning was not transmitted, for a thousand years there was no true Confucian... Ming-tao, born fourteen hundred years afterwards, *found the untransmitted learning in the remaining classics*, and made it his object to use this Way to awaken this people." (YCWC. 7/7B/6-9)

The claim that the Ch'êngs and Chang Tsai were the first to restore the teaching of the sages, lost since the death of Mencius, is repeatedly made by the Ch'êngs and their disciples.<sup>25</sup> This formula (which from Hu Hung and Chu Hsi onwards is applied to Chou Tun-yi) is admittedly used mostly in panegyrics, but as a matter of fact there is scarcely a prominent Confucian later than the Warring Kingdoms for whom the Ch'êngs have the least respect. Tung Chung-shu, Yang Hsiung, the Wei-Chin scholars, Han Yü, are all criticized freely. Of their immediate predecessors those who receive most favourable mention are militant Confucians such as Hu Yüan<sup>26</sup> and Sun Fu,<sup>27</sup> but these had no philosophical ideas to be accepted or rejected.

There can be no doubt that it was the influence of the school of

#### APPENDICES

charts and numbers (in particular, the personal influence of Chou Tun-yi) that first awakened the Ch'êngs to an interest in speculation; but they were quite justified in supposing that their own approach was quite different. In the first place Liu Mu, Shao Yung and Chou Tun-yi were not polemical Confucians; on the contrary their thought is of the hybrid kind prevalent since the Han against which the Ch'êngs were in revolt. As we have seen, the Shao school openly regarded the Taoist Ch'én T'u'an as its founder. Shao Yung often quotes Lao-tzü and Chuang-tzü, nearly always with approval.<sup>28</sup> Chu Hsi remarked on the Taoist sentiments in his poetry; such themes as alchemy and the superiority of foolishness over intelligence also surprise one in the poetry of Chou Tun-yi.<sup>29</sup> The works of Liu Mu, Shao Yung and Chou Tun-yi were all included in the two Taoist collections.<sup>30</sup> In the middle of the eleventh century the Confucian revival and the development of a philosophy out of the *Book of Changes* were still separate movements, which only run together in the work of the Ch'êngs and Chang Tsai.

Further, their attitude to the *Book of Changes* is essentially different from that of their predecessors. The charts which are so prominent in earlier writers, and which were revived by Chu Hsi, are completely absent from the works of the Ch'êngs and Chang Tsai. They are equally indifferent to numerical speculation, and reject the claim that the pre-existent "images" of things represented by the diagrams of the *Changes* are derived from number. Writing to an enquirer, Yi-ch'u'an says:

"You say in your letter that 'the meaning of the *Changes* is ultimately derived from numbers'. But this statement is wrong. There are principles before there are images, and images before there are numbers. In the *Changes* we depend on the images to understand the principles, and it is also from the images that we know the numbers. If we grasp the meaning, the images and numbers can be taken for granted. If you go out of your way to exhaust the secrets of the images and explore the most minute implications of the numbers, that is to 'investigate the stream all the way to its end', which is the object of fortune-tellers and not the concern of a Confucian."

(YCWC. 5/16A/4-7)

Yi-ch'u'an expounds the hexagrams as a series of moral admonitions, not as symbols of the evolution of the universe, and in fact very little of his philosophy is to be found in his commentary on the *Changes*.

The appendices (the last five of which are not covered by his commentary) are an important source of his ideas, but no more so than *Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean*.

The central place in the systems of Liu Mu, Shao Yung and Chou Tun-yi is occupied by the Supreme Ultimate, in that of the Ch'êngs by *li* (principle). This is much more than a change in terminology. Both words refer to a "one" behind the "many"; but to call it the Supreme Ultimate implies that all things come from the same source, being produced by the division of a primal unit; to call it *li*, that they are united by a single principle running through them, from which one can infer from the known to the unknown. The new term is thus both less high-sounding and more rational than the old, and calls attention to the sudden change of intellectual climate of which one is conscious in passing from Chou Tun-yi to the Ch'êngs. The older philosophy is expounded more systematically, in consecutive series of charts and numerical calculations; but it persuades less by reason than by the fascination of symmetry. The ideas of the Ch'êngs are scattered over their sayings, commentaries, and letters, and are seldom justified by arguments except in answer to some doubting disciple; but when assembled they form a coherent world-picture designed to deal with real problems. Nor do they tantalize us with any of the mystifications of their predecessors, who always have the air of expounding secrets to an esoteric circle. The difficulty of understanding them is simply the inevitable difficulty of understanding the ways of thought of a remote civilization nine hundred years ago.

The Ch'êngs were extremely critical of Liu Mu.<sup>31</sup> They were personal friends of Shao Yung, who also lived at Loyang, and recognized him as a true Confucian, but were indifferent to his cosmological speculations. Ming-tao once examined his system, but when his brother later asked him about it replied "I have completely forgotten it."<sup>32</sup> Asked by Ch'ao Yüeh-chih for instruction in Shao Yung's philosophy, Yi-ch'uan refused saying:

"I lived in the same street with Shao Yung for some thirty years. There was nothing else in the world that we did not discuss; but we never spoke a word about numbers." (WS, 12/18B/1f)

Their attitude to Chou Tun-yi needs a more detailed examination. There is no doubt that they studied under him in 1046-7.<sup>33</sup> But at the time when they left him the elder of the brothers was only 16, and there is no evidence of any contact between them after 1049;<sup>34</sup>

moreover it was after leaving Chou Tun-yi that Ming-tao experimented with Buddhism and Taoism for nearly ten years. Chu Hsi, whose own system is a combination of those of Chou Tun-yi and of the Ch'êngs, naturally attached great importance to a fact which made it plausible to suppose that the latter derived their ideas from the former. The assumption that the Ch'êngs merely developed a stage further what they learned from Chou Tun-yi, the supposed founder of the Neo-Confucian school, remains unquestioned in the standard works of Fêng Yu-lan and Ch'êng Chung-fan, Bruce and Forke. But Chu Hsi's claim was not received without criticism in his own time. Wang Ying-ch'en wrote in a letter to him:

"I am afraid that it is going too far to say that the Ch'êng brothers were disciples of Chou Tun-yi. Fan Chung-yen once saw Chang Tsai, thought highly of him, and gave him the *Doctrine of the Mean*; but one would not say that Chang Tsai was his disciple."<sup>35</sup>

More concrete objections were raised by Wang Tao (1487-1547), Chu Yi-tsun (1629-1709) and in our own time by Ch'ien Mu, Kuan Tao-chung, and Yao Ming-ta.<sup>36</sup> These point out that there is some question what sort of relationship is implied by the early statements that the two Ch'êngs "requested instruction from" or "received instruction from" Chou Tun-yi, or "heard him discuss the Way";<sup>37</sup> and that certainly they do not seem to have regarded him as formally their teacher. Whereas Yi-ch'uan always refers to Hu Yüan, his teacher at the academy, as *Hu hsien-shêng* 先生,<sup>38</sup> both of them call Chou Tun-yi by his style, "Chou Mao-shu".<sup>39</sup> Again, the last syllables in the names Chou Tun-yi and Ch'êng Yi happen to be written with the same character. The former name was altered from Chou Tun-shih in 1063, to avoid an Imperial taboo; Chou Tun-yi would hardly have assumed the name of a disciple, and if he had, it would have been the duty of the disciple to change his own.

There are only about fourteen references to Chou Tun-yi in the collected works of the Ch'êngs.<sup>40</sup> One fragment declares, unless the loss of its context gives a false impression, that "Chou Tun-yi was a poor Zen Buddhist." 周茂叔窮禪客.<sup>41</sup> With this possible exception, the references are complimentary. On one occasion, after hearing Shao Yung discuss a problem he had raised, Yi-ch'uan said:

"In all my life the only person I have known to argue as well as this was Chou Tun-yi, but not as systematically as yourself."

(WC Supplement, 5A/5)

"Yi-ch'uan said: There is a saying of the men of old—"To talk with you for one night is as good as ten years' study'. But if in one day you make a real gain, it is worth much more than ten years' study. I once saw Li Ch'u-p'ing ask Chou Tun-yi what to do about his desire to study. Chou Tun-yi said: 'You are too old for it. It would be better for me to talk to you.' Ch'u-p'ing then listened to his talk, and after two years was enlightened." (YS, 303/10f)

A curious feature of the references to Chou Tun-yi is that, unlike those to Liu Mu, Shao Yung and Chang Tsai, they are never concerned with his ideas. One has the impression that the Ch'êngs deliberately avoided alluding to them, perhaps because they did not wish to criticize a man whom they revered, who had given them their first introduction to speculative problems, and whose views were in any case little known. What is still more striking is that he is never mentioned among the few contemporaries whom the Ch'êngs recognised as true Confucians:

"The only men of the present age whose faith in the Way was genuine and who were not deluded by false doctrines were Shao Yung of Loyang and Chang Tsai of Ch'in." (YS, 76/8)

"I have met many people, but only three whose doctrines were uncorrupted—Chang Tsai, Shao Yung and Ssü-ma Kuang."

(YS, 21/6)

"But since Mencius there has been nothing of value except a single essay [of Han Yü], the *Inquiry into the Way*. In it there are certainly many erroneous statements, but the essential point is that the general idea is more or less right. As for the *West Inscription* (of Chang Tsai), it contains the whole doctrine on which the *Inquiry into the Way* is based. The *Inquiry* only deals with the Way, and the thought of the *West Inscription* is altogether beyond its scope. Among the works of Chang Tsai, this alone is flawless. No such writing has been seen since Mencius." (YS, 39/4-6)

"There have been many scholars of wide learning in the present age, but in the end they have all gone over to Zen. Among those independent enough not to be deluded, the best were Chang Tsai and Shao Yung; but I am afraid that in becoming popularized their opinions have not escaped this corruption." (YS, 188/14)

The philosophy of the Ch'êngs is not a development of that of Chou Tun-yi; it is based on quite different premises. According to Chou Tun-yi, the Supreme Ultimate produces the "two ethers", Yin

and Yang; these produce the five elements; and the interaction of all the preceding produces the innumerable things. According to the Ch'êngs, things are composed of ether and follow principles which are all related—"The innumerable principles amount to one principle."<sup>40</sup> Chu Hsi, following his teacher Li T'ung,<sup>41</sup> combines the two systems, identifying the Supreme Ultimate with principle. Since it has been the practice for seven hundred years to study the *Explanation of the Supreme Ultimate Chart* with Chu Hsi's commentary, it has not been realized that the identification involves a forced combination of incompatible ideas the flaws in which are still apparent. In the first place, Chou Tun-yi and Chu Hsi agree that the Yin and Yang and the five elements are ether; but there is nothing in the *Explanation of the Chart* to suggest that there is any difference in kind between the Supreme Ultimate producing the Yin and Yang and the Yin and Yang producing the five elements. The Supreme Ultimate ought by analogy to be the original undivided ether. This was in fact the view of Liu Mu:

"The Supreme Ultimate is the one ether. Before heaven and earth divided, the primal ether was a chaotic unity. The parts into which the one ether divided are called the two types."<sup>42</sup>

Further, the identification of the Supreme Ultimate with principle implies that principle produced the ether, although Chu Hsi himself generally asserts that they are co-existent. To deal with this problem, Chu Hsi wavers between a forced interpretation of the statement that the Supreme Ultimate produces the Yin and Yang:

"The Supreme Ultimate is principle; the moving and the still are ether. When the ether goes forward, principle goes with it; the two being always mutually dependent are inseparable. The Supreme Ultimate may be compared to a man and the moving and the still to a horse. It is by the horse that the man is carried and by the man that the horse is ridden. When the horse comes out and goes in, the man comes and goes with it; in the alternation of moving and still, the mystery of the Supreme Ultimate is always present",  
and a retraction of his view that the two are mutually dependent:

"The Supreme Ultimate produces the Yin and Yang — principle producing ether."<sup>43</sup>

There is not a single reference to the Supreme Ultimate in the collected works of the Ch'êngs, except in the anonymous *Preface to the Changes* which, as was shown in Appendix I, is unlikely to have been written by Yi-ch'uan. Chu Hsi was repeatedly asked to account

for this fact, by his disciples, by his friend Chang Shih, and by his opponent Lu Chiu-yüan.<sup>44</sup> He could only say that the Ch'êngs did not speak of it because none of their disciples was worthy to be taught such a mystery. It is interesting also that when Chu Hsi offers proof of their dependence on Chou Tun-yi, he produces nothing from the sayings and commentaries of the Ch'êngs, but only the elegies at the end of a couple of epitaphs by Ming-tao, and a youthful essay by Yi-ch'uan.<sup>45</sup> The last of these, the *Discussion of What Sort of Learning Yen-tzû Loved* which attracted Hu Yüan's attention when Yi-ch'uan was at the academy, does contain echoes of whole phrases from the writings of Chou Tun-yi. But he wrote it in his early 20's, at a time when his brother was still interested in Buddhism and neither had yet met Chang Tsai. It shows traces of Chou Tun-yi's ideas, but scarcely any trace of the mature ideas of Yi-ch'uan himself.<sup>46</sup>

If the Ch'êngs do not mention the Supreme Ultimate, neither does Chou Tun-yi anticipate their views on *li*, "principle". He uses the word *li* three times, two of which are to explain its homophone *li* 禮 "propriety", as had been done already in the *Li chi*.<sup>47</sup> But the third reference in his *T'ung-shu* has been produced by Fêng Yu-lan as evidence that he did after all identify principle with the Supreme Ultimate:<sup>48</sup>

"Principle, Nature, and the Decree.

"Whether manifest or hidden, only the intelligence can illuminate them.

"The hard may be good or bad; the same is true of the soft. Stop at the mean.

"The two ethers and the five elements evolve the innumerable things. The five dissimilars are two realities, at the root of the two there is one. Thus the innumerable things become one, the one reality has innumerable divisions. If the innumerable and the one are each correct, small and great will have their allotted places."<sup>49</sup>

The "one reality" of the last part is evidently the Supreme Ultimate, and Fêng Yu-lan infers from the heading that it is identified with principle. But, as Chu Hsi recognized in his commentary, the three parts of the section correspond to the three subjects in the heading. A comparison with other sections in which there are several subjects in the heading shows that they are frequently dealt with successively in this way, and also that there is no presumption that the three are identified.<sup>50</sup> All that Chou Tun-yi says about principles is that "whether

manifest or hidden, only the intelligence can illuminate them." His next sentence refers to the nature, as is clear from a parallel passage:

"The nature is hard and soft, good and bad. All that matters is the mean."<sup>51</sup>

The last part refers not to principle but to the decree, and means that if all things preserve their proper relation to the Supreme Ultimate, each will have the place "decreed" or "allotted" for it.

There are a couple of questions on which the Ch'êngs directly repudiate the view held by Chou Tun-yi, without however mentioning him by name. Thus Chou Tun-yi says:

"Of the virtues, love is called benevolence, to do what one should do duty, to accord with principle propriety, understanding wisdom, and to fulfil one's obligations good faith."<sup>52</sup>

On the first of these Yi-ch'u'an says:

"According to Mencius, the feeling of sympathy is benevolence; his successors consequently identified love with benevolence. Certainly sympathy is love; but love belongs only to the passions and benevolence only to the nature. How can love alone be regarded as benevolence?" (YS, 203/1f)

This point is a fundamental one for the Ch'êngs. Since benevolence (*jén*) belongs to the nature, and nature is unchanging principle, it cannot be identified with one of the passions; it is the altruistic principle which underlies the emotion of love but is distinct from it. Again, we are told in the *Explanation of the Chart* that

"The sage, settling affairs according to the mean, correctness, benevolence and duty, makes stillness the ruling consideration."<sup>53</sup>

But the Ch'êngs strongly objected to any suggestion that man is in his best state when all the motions of his mind are "stilled" (*ching A*, 靜), which implies the superiority of meditation over action. When Chang Tsai wrote that in "stabilising" himself (*ting* 定) he still failed to prevent his thoughts from moving, Ming-tao replied:

"In what is called 'stability', one can be stable in movement as well as in stillness." (MTWC, 3/1A/5)

To describe the sort of mental discipline which they advocated, the Ch'êngs, by accident or design, chose a rhyme-word which is now pronounced the same, although in their time it no doubt still had a different initial.<sup>54</sup> This was *ching B*, (敬), generally translated "respect" or "reverence", the attitude assumed when sacrificing to spirits or serving a ruler. The Ch'êngs used it to describe a state of

perfect composure which must be maintained in the conduct of affairs as well as in contemplation. In a sentence which seems to echo Chou Tun-yi's reference to "making stillness the ruling consideration" (*chu-ching A*, 主靜), Yi-ch'uan says:

"The gentleman makes composure the ruling consideration (*chu-ching B*) in order to correct himself inwardly." (YC, 1/12A/11)

He strongly repudiated any attempt to identify the two:

"Q. Is not composure the same as stillness?

"A. To speak of stillness is to pass immediately into Buddhism. Do not use the word 'stillness', only the word 'composure'."<sup>55</sup>

(YS, 210/10f)

The immediate disciples of the Ch'êngs were also uninfluenced by the philosophy of Chou Tun-yi. In the forty-two *chüan* of the collected works of Yang Shih there are many references to the Ch'êngs, Chang Tsai and Shao Yung, but none to Chou Tun-yi, and the occasional references to the Supreme Ultimate are based on Shao Yung.<sup>56</sup> The works of Hsieh Liang-tso, Yin T'un, Yu Tso and Wang P'in are also free from Chou Tun-yi's influence, although there are a couple of passages which show acquaintance with his writings. Yin T'un pasted on the wall of his room a section of the *T'ung-shu* about the possibility of educating oneself to become a sage.<sup>57</sup> Yu Tso once mentions Chou Tun-yi as an authority equal with the Ch'êngs, and notices the difference of opinion over "stillness":

"Chou Tun-yi and Ming-tao, when explaining the essentials of learning, invariably spoke of 'stillness', because what is fundamental should be given first place. But Yi-ch'uan taught men to use 'composure' rather than 'stillness', because composure unites movement and stillness, includes both substance and function."<sup>58</sup>

It would seem, therefore, that although the Ch'êngs were introduced to philosophy by Chou Tun-yi, they threw off his influence at an early age. However, there is no doubt that the circulation of the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* and the *T'ung shu* in the twelfth century originated in the Ch'êng school. The works of Chou Tun-yi were little known in the eleventh century; as Chu Hsi was fond of observing, only the father of the two Ch'êngs was able to recognize Chou Tun-yi's genius, and only they were worthy to receive his teaching.<sup>59</sup> This does not justify suspicion of their genuineness, for they are mentioned in the epitaph on Chou Tun-yi by P'an Hsing-ssü; Ch'i K'uan found a copy in the house where Chou Tun-yi had lived

at Chiu-chiang; and the mere fact that they conflict with the ideas of the Ch'êngs is proof that their school did not forge them.<sup>60</sup> It would seem likely that the Ch'êngs possessed copies of the works which became available to their disciples after the death of Yi-ch'u'an in 1107. According to the postscript to the *T'ung-shu* written by Ch'i K'uan in 1144, it was first made known outside the Ch'êng school by the disciple Hou Chung-liang, who gave it to someone with the style Kao Yüan-chü, and to Chu Chén. Ch'i K'uan received manuscripts from these two and from his teacher Yin T'un, another Ch'êng disciple, who "also said he had got it from Mister Ch'êng."<sup>61</sup> Chu Chén used the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* in his commentary on the Changes, on which he was working from 1116 to 1134.<sup>62</sup> An undated preface to the *T'ung-shu* was written by Hu Hung, who had studied under Hou Chung-liang after the latter's arrival at Chingchou in 1126.<sup>63</sup> In this Chou Tun-yi is definitely treated as the founder of the new movement; and in his preface to Chang Tsai's *Correction of Delusions*, after the customary lament over the decline which followed the death of Mencius, Hu Hung says:

"After the rise of the present dynasty worthy and wise men appeared again. In Ch'ung-ling there was Chou Tun-yi, in Loyang Shao Yung and the two Ch'êngs, in Ch'in Chang Tsai."<sup>64</sup>

What picture of the origins of Neo-Confucianism emerges from these criticisms of the traditional view? Any attempt to locate the beginning or end or turning-point of a movement of ideas is to some extent arbitrary; but for present purposes it is convenient to distinguish three phases:

(a) Until the middle of the eleventh century there were two distinct movements:

(i) The orthodox Confucians, maintaining the militant spirit of Han Yü and indifferent to speculation—Hu Yüan (993–1059), Fan Chung-yen (989–1052) and others.<sup>65</sup>

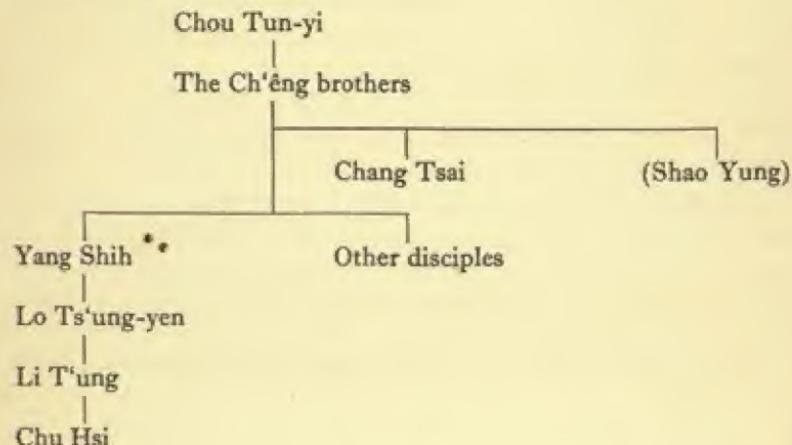
(ii) The schools in the no man's land between Confucianism and Taoism, which explained the evolution of the universe from the Supreme Ultimate with the aid of charts and numerical calculations said to come from the Taoist Ch'én T'uan (died 989)—Liu Mu (fl. 1040), Shao Yung (1011–1077), Chou Tun-yi (1017–1073).

(b) The Ch'êng brothers, Ming-tao (1032–1085) and Yi-ch'u'an (1033–1107), and their father's cousin Chang Tsai (1020–1077) combined the exclusive orthodoxy of one with the speculative spirit of the

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

other. The system of Chang Tsai, based on the Supreme Void, lost its influence after his death, while that of the Ch'êngs, based on *li*, "principle", was widely propagated by their disciples.

(c) During the twelfth century the successors of the Ch'êng school became interested in the previously neglected Chou Tun-yi. The task of reconciling his thought with that of the Ch'êngs by the identification of the Supreme Ultimate with principle was completed by Chu Hsi (1130-1200). The acceptance of Chou Tun-yi made it necessary to detach him from his context among the thinkers of the eleventh century and to treat him as the founder of a new movement. The facts that the Ch'êngs studied under him for a short time in their adolescence, and that the school of the Ch'êngs had long since claimed that Chang Tsai had borrowed his ideas from them, made it possible for Chu Hsi to suppose that all branches of the Neo-Confucian school ultimately derived from Chou Tun-yi:



### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Feng Yu-lan, 825-6.

<sup>2</sup> MTWC, 4/1B/13f.

<sup>3</sup> Shao Po-wén, *Yi-hsüeh pien-huo* 易學辨惑, 1-7.

Ch'ao Yüeh-chih in 1107 (*Sung-shan wen-chi*, 16/11A-12A) and Chu Chen in 1134 (quoted on p.157 above) give the same list of names, but adding that of Ch'ung Fang between Ch'en T'u'an and Mu Hsiau. Since Mu Hsiau (979-1032) was born only ten years before the death of Ch'en T'u'an, this must be accepted, if, indeed, the earlier stages of the transmission are to be taken seriously at all.

Of the four supposed predecessors of Shao Yung, only Mu Hsiau has left works of undisputed authenticity (*Ho-nan Mu-kung chi*). They contain nothing on philosophy, and according to the thirteenth-century writer Tu Cheng this

## APPENDICES

was also true of the works of Ch'ung Fang (CLHC, 196/1). The collected writings of Ch'ung Fang (*Ch'ung Ming-yi chi* 程明逸集) are recorded in the *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 19/12B, but are no longer extant.

Writings attributed to Ch'én T'u'an will be discussed in n.11. Nine charts attributed to Li Chih-ts'ai are given in the *Han-shang Yi-chuan* (*Yi-kua t'u A*, 8A-17B).

<sup>4</sup> *Yi-ch'u'an chi-jang chi*, 12/26B, 14/15A.

<sup>5</sup> *Shao-shih wén-chien lu* and *Shao-shih wén-chien hou-lu*.

See especially the defence of Shao Yung's learning by Ch'én Kuan against the Ch'eng disciples Yang Shiff and Yu Tso (*Hou-lu*, 5/4A-6/2B). Yang Shih's side of the correspondence is preserved in *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 62f.

<sup>6</sup> Sung, 299/1f. A *chi* 極 is an ultimate point beyond which one cannot go—as Needham (464) observes, "not merely any boundary, but a polar or focal point on a boundary". Neo-Confucians tend to picture the *t'ai-chi* as the highest point *overhead*; the basic meaning of *chi* is "ridge-pole" (of a house), and in Chou Tun-yi's *Supreme Ultimate Chart* the *t'ai-chi* stands at the top and development proceeds downwards. Needham, to bring out this point, translates *t'ai-chi* as "Supreme Pole". But it is doubtful whether the spatial metaphor (which is no doubt connected with the Chinese practice of writing vertically and downwards) deserves to be given much weight, since Chou Tun-yi also speaks of the *chi* of movement and of stillness. I have, with some misgivings, remained faithful to Bruce's "Supreme Ultimate", since it is possible (if sometimes a little forced) to use "ultimate" for *chi* wherever it occurs in Chou Tun-yi's *Explanation of the Chart*.

<sup>7</sup> *Huang-chi ching-shih*, 12A/21A/4-9.

<sup>8</sup> See II, ch. 2 above.

<sup>9</sup> *Huang-chi ching-shih*, 12A/36A/10, 12B/23A/2, 4-6, 13A/1.

<sup>10</sup> *Sung-shan wén-chi*, 16/11A.

<sup>11</sup> The preface to the *Dragon Chart* is reproduced in the *Huang ch'ao wen chien*, 85/5A-6A (compiled by Lü Tsu-ch'ien 1177-9) and the preface and several of the charts in Chang Li's *Yi-hsiang t'u-shuo nei p'ien* (preface 1364), A, 1A-8B. The anonymous compilation *Chou Yi t'u A*, 20A-21A, C, 26B-27B, contains two charts and explanations ascribed to Ch'én T'u'an which, since they overlap Chang Li's quotation, must come from the same work. Further information can be derived from the criticisms of Lei Ssü-ch'i in his *Yi-t'u t'ung-pien* (preface 1300), 4/1B/2-2A/3, 2B/4f, 2B/10-3A/9, 3B/10-4A/2, 5B/7, 5/3B/5-4A/9, 5B/7-10, 6A/7-6B, 11A/3f.

Most of this material (except for that from the *Chou Yi t'u*) is assembled by Hu Wei (1633-1714) in his *Yi-t'u ming-pien*, 85-97. He mentions (86/7) that "The Dragon Chart of the Changer, one volume, by Ch'én T'u'an" is recorded in the *Han-tan shu-mu 韻鼎書目*, a lost catalogue compiled in the Huang-yu period (1049-53) by Li Shu.

An isolated saying of Chu Hsi pronounces that "The *Dragon Chart* is a forgery, useless". (YL, 67/35A/10). Liu Yin (1249-1293) also suspected it, on the grounds that Ch'én T'u'an and the other predecessors of Shao Yung were not known to have written anything (*Ching-hsiu hsien-shêng wén-chi*, 10/5f). This is presumably based on the assertion of Ch'ao Yüeh-chih in 1107 (as in n.10); no weight need be given to it, since the work was ascribed to Ch'én T'u'an by Li Shu some fifty years before that date. It is clear that Liu Yin's motive for rejecting it was that it conflicted with his views on the *River Chart*, and the same may be suspected of Chu Hsi.

An extant work on the cosmology of the *Changes*, the *Ma yi tao chê chêng Yi*

*hsin-fa*, the commentary on which is ascribed to Ch'én T'u'an, was also well known in the later Sung. But Chu Hsi argued convincingly that it was forged by Tai Shih-yü, the author of a postscript to it dated 1165 (*Chu-tzü ta-ch'u'an*, 81/11B-13A).

Other extant cosmological works ascribed to Ch'én T'u'an are the *Ho Lo chén-shu* and the *Ho Lo li-shu*, the former of which has a preface ascribed to Shao Yung (also available in the *Shao K'ang-chieh hsien-shéng wai-chi*, 25/8-14). Although they profess to contain the numerology of Ch'én T'u'an, neither seriously pretends to have been written by the mysterious Taoist himself; in both, Shao Yung and other later people are mentioned in the body of the text. I have not noticed any Sung references to either work.

Of the various works on alchemy, geomancy, physiognomy and divination which pass under the name of Ch'én T'u'an (cf. Yang Chia-lo, 7529/6(55)), it is only necessary to mention the *Yin-chén-chün huan tan kē chu*, which may have been known to Chou Tun-yi (cf. note 18 below).

A collection of the supposed writings of Ch'én T'u'an entitled *Mu-yen chi* 木巖集 is said to have been brought to Japan by the monk Ingen (1592-1673). I am informed by Professor Enoki of the Tōyō Bunko, Tōkyō, that it is no longer extant. The claim of Takase (*op.cit.* 579-81), repeated by Forke (*op.cit.* 336-8), that Ch'én T'u'an anticipated the Neo-Confucian dualism of *li* and *ch'i*, is based on this source. But the passage summarized by Takase is quoted at length by Ōe Bunjō (*op.cit.* 37f). Although it speaks of one substance or root underlying all things, it does not call this *li*.

<sup>12</sup> Sung, 291/1f.

<sup>13</sup> This is also implied by Tu Chêng, writing Chou Tun-yi's year-table about 1221:

"Some say that Ch'én T'u'an transmitted (the *Supreme Ultimate Chart*) to Ch'ung Fang, Fang to Mu Hsiu, Hsiu to Chou Tun-yi . . . But the *Record of the Dragon Chart* which he wrote simply presents its numbers without writing about them; it has absolutely no resemblance to the *Explanation of the Supreme Ultimate Chart*." (CLHC, 195/15-196/2)

<sup>14</sup> *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 1A/7B. Practically nothing is known of Liu Mu (T. Chang-min). The thirteenth-century bibliography *Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i* (8/7) notes that he was already being confused with the Liu Mu (T. Hsien-chih, 1011-64) whose epitaph was written by Wang An-shih (*Wang Lin-ch'u'an chi*, 10/31-33). The life of Liu Mu in the *Sung Yüan hsüeh-an*, 1/105f, unfortunately proves to be based almost entirely on this epitaph.

<sup>15</sup> The line of transmission is given (with slight variations) down to Fan O-ch'ang by Shao Po-wén (*Yi hsüeh pien huo*, 7A/6-8), and down to Liu Mu by Ch'ao Yüeh-chih, who studied under Shao Po-wén in Loyang (*Sung-shan wén chi*, 16/11B/3) and by Chu Chén, who also studied among the various schools in Loyang (quoted on p.157).

The *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 1/12A, mentions a work on the textual criticism of the *Book of Changes*, the *Yi-cheng chui-chien* 易證密簡 written in the T'ien-hsi period (1017-1021) by Fan O-ch'ang, and says that an emendation used by Yi-ch'u'an (YC, 4/17A/8) is taken from it. The edition recorded by the *Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i*, 7f, had an extra volume which was also in independent circulation as the *Source and Stream Chart* (*Yüan liu t'u* 源流圖). This was a cosmological chart similar to those of the *Record of the Dragon Chart* and Liu Mu; it is described and criticized by Lei Ssü-ch'i (*Yi t'u t'ung pien*, 5/7A/3-8A/3). The references to Fan O-ch'ang in *Chou Yi t'u C*, 20AB, and *Ching-hsüu hsien shéng wén chi*, 10/4, 11/4f, are no doubt also based on the *Source and Stream Chart*.

## APPENDICES

There is strong reason to suspect that the tradition that Fan O-ch'ang's learning came from Ch'en T'uan is an invention of the Shao circle, which no doubt wished to show that all the contemporary schools of cosmological speculation were offshoots of their own. Fan O-ch'ang stated in the *Yi-chêng chui-chien* that his teacher was Li Ch'u-yüeh, whose learning was derived from Hsü Chien (*Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i*, 7f, cf. *Chün-chai tu-shu chih*, 1/12A). Hsü Chien lived in the T'ang dynasty, before Ch'en T'uan, as is clear from an epitaph on his descendant Hsü Hang (1058-1115) by Yang Shih (*Yang Kuei-shan chi*, complete, 31/9A-11A), in which it is said that Hsü Hang's ancestry is known only for four generations, the line from Hsü Chien to his great-great-grandfather having been lost in the disorders of the fall of T'ang and the Five Dynasties. But Shao Po-wen and Chu Chen both assume that Fan O-ch'ang was the immediate disciple of Hsü Chien, and link him to the Shao school by the impossible claim that Hsü Chien derived his learning from Ch'en T'uan's disciple Ch'ung Fang (according to Chu Chen, indirectly through Li Kai). Ch'ao Yüeh-chih makes the more plausible claim that Fan O-ch'ang learned directly from Ch'ung Fang, at the cost of contradicting Fan O-ch'ang's own statement in the *Yi-chêng chui-chien*.

<sup>10</sup> *Yi shu kou yin t'u*, Preface, 1A/3-8.

<sup>11</sup> Memorial printed at the beginning of his *Han-shang Yi-chuan* in the *T'ung-chih t'ang ching-chieh* edition. This, like the charts at the end, is absent from the more accessible *Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* edition.

<sup>12</sup> *Ho-nan Mu-kung chi*, Supplement 5B, 6B. CLHC, 187/1.

Liu Yin noticed Chou Tun-yi's age at Mu Hsiu's death as an objection to the story that he received the chart from him, but underestimated it by a couple of years. (*Ching-hsiau hsien-shêng wen-chi*, 14/7)

The tradition that Chou Tun-yi's learning came from Ch'en T'uan through Mu Hsiu is often mentioned by Sung writers, but even Lu Chiu-yian, who was anxious to discredit the chart by showing that it was originally Taoist, could quote no authority except Chu Chen (*Hsiang-shan hsien-shêng ch'üan-chi*, 24/11). Chu Hsi himself at one time took the possibility seriously (CLHC, 129/11-130/1), being impressed by a reference to the Yin and Yang by Chang Yung (931-1000), an acquaintance of Ch'en T'uan:

"Chang Yung said to Li T'ien: 'Did you know that in judicial cases there is Yin and Yang?' When he answered 'No', Chang Yung said: 'All judicial cases, until they are decided in writing, belong to the Yang. What is important in the Yang is producing; it can be adapted to changing situations. After the written decision they belong to the Yin; what is important in the Yin is punishment (or 'assuming form'; *hsing* 刑). In punishment we respect the correct use of names; names are not to be altered.'" (*Sung-pên Kuai-ya hsien-shêng wen-chi*, 12/4B/2-5)

But this implies only the common assumptions concerning the Yin and Yang current for a thousand years; it is difficult to see why Chu Hsi was particularly reminded of Chou Tun-yi.

The claim that the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* came from Ch'en T'uan was revived by the Ch'ing critics of the Sung school:

Huang Tsung-yen (1616-1686), *Yi-ksüeh pien-huo*

Mao Chi-ling (1623-1716), *T'ai-chi-t'u shuo yi-yi* 太極圖說遺譜 (in *Hsi-ho ho chi*)

Chu Yi-tsun (1629-1709), *T'ai-chi-t'u shou-shou-k'ao* (*P'u-shu ting-chi*, B, 925f)

These scholars could produce nothing in support of Chu Chen's account of its transmission except an *Ultimate of Nothing Chart* (*Wu-chi t'u* 無極圖)

ascribed to Ch'en T'uan (*Yi-hsüeh pien-huo*, 29B, *P'u-zhu t'ing-chi*, B, 925f). This has the same figures as the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* but different words, illustrating not the evolution of the cosmos but the spiritual progress of the Taoist adept. But since works were already being forged in Ch'en T'uan's name at least as early as the twelfth century (see note 11 above) we can hardly accept this one on seventeenth-century authority. The *Ultimate of Nothing Chart* appears in the *Chin-tan ta-ch'eng chi*, 9/1A-2A, a work of the late Sung or Yüan, without being ascribed to Ch'en T'uan, and accompanied by an *Explanation* modelled on that of Chou Tun-yi. A chart with the same title and figures but different words appears in Wei Ch'i's commentary on the *Yü ch'ing tsu-chi . . . ching-chu*, 1/9A. Wei Ch'i, whose preface is dated 1309, expressly says that he produced it himself in imitation of the *Supreme Ultimate Chart*.

A chart very similar to the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* is to be found in the *Shang-fang ta-tung chén-yüan miao-ching p'in t'u*, a Taoist work with a preface ascribed to the T'ang Emperor Ming-huang (713-755). This has been used by many scholars, including Feng Yu-lan (*op.cit.* 822), as proof that the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* was known in Taoist circles long before Chou Tun-yi. But this book begins with an obviously imaginary account of an address by Ming-huang to the Taoist immortals, at the end of which he ascends into the sky; and it uses freely several characters tabooed under the T'ang dynasty (測世民). Unless positive evidence can be produced that it is earlier than Chou Tun-yi, it does not deserve consideration.

It seems, therefore, that there is no good reason to doubt that Chou Tun-yi was the author of the *Supreme Ultimate Chart*. The tradition that it was passed down to him from Ch'en T'uan depends solely on Chu Chen, and involves the improbable assumption that it was entrusted to him at the age of 15 or less. Further, we have already (note 15 above) noticed grounds for suspicion that such traditions may reflect a desire of the Shao school to show that all cosmological charts originated in their own circle. But the question of the origin of the *Supreme Ultimate Chart* must be kept separate from the more general question of the influence(s) behind Chou Tun-yi's doctrines. Chow Yih-ch'ing (*op.cit.* 53) has called attention to a poem of Chou Tun-yi, *On Reading the Secret of the Elixir of Ying-chen-chün* 讀英眞君丹訣 (CLHC, 151/1), in which he says:

"Since I first read the *Secret of the Elixir* I have had faith in Hsi-yi  
(Ch'en T'uan)

For I have caught the springs of creation by the Yin and Yang."

Chow Yih-ch'ing mentions that he has been unable to find the alchemical work in question. But the title of the poem is given in one of Chu Hsi's letters (*Chu-tsü ta-ch'üan*, continuation, 3/4B/11) with Yin 陰 in the place of Ying. Could it be the *Yin-chén-chün huai-tan k'e* 陰眞君還丹歌 (Taoist canon 59), the commentary of which is ascribed to Ch'en T'uan?

<sup>19</sup> There is some doubt as to the syntax of *wu chi* 無極, which may be taken either as (i) "Not-having ultimate" (infinite)—verb and object, or as (ii) "Not-having reaching-its-ultimate" (absolute nothing)—subject and verb.

It is not at all clear which position Chu Hsi takes on this question. At one point he speaks of *wu-chi* as "infinite in all four directions and above and below" (四方去無極上下去無極, CLHC, 47/2), at another he agrees with a disciple's definition "*Wu-chi* is the extreme of not-having" (無極是無之至, CLHC, 49/6).

There is no doubt that *wu-chi* usually means "infinite", and most translators (the latest is Needham, *op.cit.* 460, "That which has no Pole") have preferred the former alternative. On the other hand the analogy with *tung chi* 動極 ("Movement

## APPENDICES

reaches-its-ultimate") in the next sentence points the other way. Forke (*op.cit.* 49–51) gives strong reasons for preferring the latter alternative, and translates "das Prinzip des Nichtseins". Graf (*op.cit.* 2/25) translates "das nicht vorhandene Letzte".

I am inclined to accept Forke's arguments, but to take *tsu chi* as the ultimate degree of "not-having". "Having" and "not-having" are relative; the final point reached in the intellectual process of stripping the world of sensible qualities is also the starting-point from which the world evolves—"It is the ultimate of nothing which is the Supreme Ultimate".

<sup>20</sup> CLHC, 2/1f.

<sup>21</sup> As note 17 above.

<sup>22</sup> Yi-ch'uan's year-table, YS, 371/2n.

<sup>23</sup> YS Supplement, 379/12. The year 1132 is mentioned in 379/6, and Hu An-kuo died in 1138.

<sup>24</sup> *Kuo shih ch'uan chia Yi shuo*, Preface, 1/7–9. It may be added that the *Shêng-mén shih-yeh t'u* of Li Yüan-kang (the preface of which, dated 1170, says that he had been studying philosophy for nearly thirty years) contains a chart illustrating the "correct line of transmission of the Way" in which the line passes from the earliest sages down to Mencius and then jumps directly to Yi-ch'uan and Ming-tao.

<sup>25</sup> YCWC, 7/6B/1, 7A/13, 9B/5, 11, 10A/9f. YS, 218/2, 362/9f. *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 95/7f.

<sup>26</sup> YS, 50/3, 272/7. YC, 2/41B/9.

<sup>27</sup> YS, 237/2, 269/8.

<sup>28</sup> *Huang-chi ching-shih*, 12B/10A/1–4, 26A/9–26B/6, 27A/2, 28A/1–4, 9f.

<sup>29</sup> YL, 100/2A/11f. CLHC, 151/1, 140/11f.

<sup>30</sup> The works of Liu Mu and Shao Yung are included in the *Tao-tsang* (71, 705–18, 720–23) and of Chou Tun-yi in the *Tao-tsang chi-yao* (*Hsing*, 7, 216). The works of the Ch'êngs, Chang Tsai and Chu Hsi are not included, except for Chu Hsi's commentary on the *T'i'an-t'ung ch'i*.

<sup>31</sup> YS, 245–6.

<sup>32</sup> WS, 12/6B/6–12.

<sup>33</sup> YS, 16/1, 361/2. YCWC, 7/6A/11. *Yüan-yen chi*, 3/54A/8, 54B/5.

<sup>34</sup> Hsü Yu-fêng (95f) argues that besides their contact with Chou Tun-yi at Nan-an in 1046, the Ch'êngs met him again (after he had moved to Ch'êñ-chou) in 1048. The principal evidence for this is a saying of Yi-ch'uan (YS, 303/10f, translated on p.162 above) which refers to having seen Li Ch'u-p'ing question Chou Tun-yi. Li Ch'u-p'ing (died 1049) is known to have met Chou Tun-yi when both held office at Ch'êñ-chou. (CLHC, 189/5–8, 201/2f)

<sup>35</sup> *Wên-ting chi*, 173/5, cf. 172/8. For Chu Hsi's replies, see *Chu-tzû ta-ch'üan*, 30/8B/7–10, 9A/12–9B/2, 11B/2–10. YL, 93/8A/12.

<sup>36</sup> *Shun-ch'ü hsien-shêng wén-lu*, 4/21A/4–21B/6. Chu Yi-tsun as in note 18. Ch'ien Mu, *Kuo-hsüeh*, 2/15f. Kuan Tao-chung, 32–42. Yao Ming-ta 75f.

<sup>37</sup> YS, 50/3, 272/7. YC, 2/41B/9.

<sup>38</sup> YS, 16/1, 63/11, 64/12, 72/3, 91/3n, 93/2, 105/3, 303/10f, 304/3–5. WS, 2/4B/4, 10/4B/11. YCWC, 7/6A/11, 8/5A/2. WC Supplement, 5A/5.

Hsü Yu-fêng (94), rejecting this argument, gives some examples of Sung writers referring to their teachers by style alone. He also gives two sayings from the *Yi-shu* which mention Hu Yüan without calling him *hsien-shêng* (YS, 18/1, 79/3). But both these sayings are unattributed, and may be Ming-tao's; it was only Yi-ch'uan who studied under Hu Yüan. The fact that the Ch'êngs never apply *hsien-shêng* to Chou Tun-yi, while sayings directly attributed to

Yi-ch'uan regularly apply it to Hu Yüan, surely has more weight than Hsü Yü-feng allows.

<sup>33</sup> YS, 93/2.

<sup>34</sup> YS, 216/11.

<sup>35</sup> *Li Yen-p'ing chi*, 2/24A-25A.

<sup>36</sup> *Yi-shu kou-yin t'u A*, 1B/1. This view is already found in the Han commentator Chéng Hsüan, *Chou Yi Chéng chu*, 93/5.

<sup>37</sup> CLHC, 53/1f, 6/5.

<sup>38</sup> YL, 93/8B/3, 94/21B/4. CLHC, 28/11-29/4, 34/3.

<sup>39</sup> Chu Hsi, CLHC, 128/12, referring to LTWC, 4/2A-3B, 8A-9A, YCWC, 4/1A-2A.

<sup>40</sup> The *Discussion of What Sort of Learning Yen-tsü Loved* was probably written in 1056 (Hsü Yü-feng 106-7). For echoes of Chou Tun-yi, compare

YCWC, 4/1A/3 with CLHC 2/4

/3 2/4

1B/10f 107/6

<sup>41</sup> *T'ung-shu* 3, 13 (CLHC, 81/8, 99/10), cf. Couvreur, *Li-ki*, 385/8f.

<sup>42</sup> Fēng Yu-lan, 825f.

<sup>43</sup> *T'ung-shu*, 22 (CLHC, 109/9-110/3)

<sup>44</sup> *T'ung-shu*, 3, 13, 21, 25, 31, 32, 33. The headings were in the original text as known to Chu Hsi (CLHC, 129/4f, 133/7, 9).

<sup>45</sup> *T'ung-shu*, 7 (CLHC, 91/1).

<sup>46</sup> *T'ung-shu*, 3 (CLHC, 81/8).

<sup>47</sup> CLHC, 2/4f.

<sup>48</sup> Five hundred years earlier, according to Karlgren's reconstruction (*Analytical Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*, 1923, Nos. 1199, 396), *ching* "stillness" had been pronounced 'DZ'JÄNG and *ching* "reverence" KJONG.

<sup>49</sup> The question of "stillness" was often discussed in relation to the explanation of the hexagram *Fu* ("return") in the *Book of Changes*: "Do we not see in *Fu* the mind of heaven and earth?" Wang Pi (226-249) had claimed that "when movement ceases within the earth, the mind of heaven and earth is seen", (*Chou-Yi Wang Han chu*, 3/4B/6-8). Yi-ch'uan insisted that "the beginning of movement is the mind of heaven and earth." (YC, 2/33A/7-9)

<sup>50</sup> Yang Kuei-shan *chi* (complete), 15/9B/7f, 19/7A/4f. *Kuei-shan yü-lu*, 4/5B.

<sup>51</sup> Yin Ho-ching *chi* (complete), 5/1A/4-7. *T'ung-shu*, 20.

<sup>52</sup> Yu Ch'i-hsien *chi*, 9/1A/9-1B/3. In his surviving sayings and writings Ming-tao certainly agrees with his brother in using "composure".

<sup>53</sup> CLHC, 28/13. YL, 93/7B/3, 7.

<sup>54</sup> CLHC, 201/8, 133/1. Ch'i K'uan says that the copy he found at Chiu-chiang did not contain the *Supreme Ultimate Chart*, but it evidently contained the *Explanation of the Chart* since Chu Hsi quotes its variant for the opening sentence (CLHC, 133/10). The doubts concerning the genuineness of the *Explanation* expressed by Lu Chiu-yüan (*Hsiang-shan hsien-shêng ch'üan-chi*, 23/7-11) are merely a weapon in his controversy with Chu Hsi over the term "ultimate of nothing".

<sup>55</sup> CLHC, 132f.

<sup>56</sup> *Han-shang Yi-chuan*, *Yi-kua t'u*, 7A.

<sup>57</sup> CLHC, 131f. *Wu-fêng chi*, 3/48B/7.

It is interesting that all the earliest writers on the works of Chou Tun-yi (Chu Chén, Hu Hung, Ch'i K'uan) received them directly or indirectly from the little known Ch'êng disciple Hou Chung-liang, none of whose writings have

#### APPENDICES

survived. Chung-liang was the grandson of Hou K'o, the brother of the Ch'êngs' mother. Chu Hsi's brief account of him in the *Yi Lo yüan-yüan lu*, 127, includes one story which deserves attention:

"It has been said that one Hou Chung-liang, after following Yi-ch'u'an for a short time without being enlightened, went on a journey to visit Chou Tun-yi. After three days with Chou Tun-yi, in which they talked all night from opposite beds, he said himself that what he had learned was like a sight of the vastness of heaven. Yi-ch'u'an was also astonished at the change in him and said: 'You must have been with Chou Tun-yi!'"

If this story were true, it would raise the possibility that the works of Chou Tun-yi passed directly to Hou Chung-liang without going through the hands of the Ch'êngs. But Chu Hsi presents the story with reservations, giving reasons for doubting whether Hou Chung-liang can have been adult when Chou Tun-yi died (1073). His suspicion was justified, for Ming-tao's epitaph on Hou K'o (1007-79) mentions that his three grandsons were still children (MTWC, 4/5B/12).

<sup>\*\*</sup> *Wu-fêng chi*, 3/16A/6-8.

<sup>\*\*</sup> See Yasui.

APPENDIX III  
THE CONNEXION BETWEEN CHANG TSAI AND THE CH'ÉNG  
BROTHERS

Until recently it was generally assumed that Chang Tsai's philosophy was originally inspired by the influence of the Ch'éng brothers. This view goes back to disciples of the latter such as Yang Shih and Yu Tso:

"Chang Tsai's learning originally came from the Ch'éngs, but his disciples in Kuanchung use his writings as authorities and wish to regard themselves as a separate school."<sup>1</sup>

"Then, hearing Ming-tao's discussions, he sent away his disciples and completely abandoned his old learning in order to devote himself to the Way. . . . Chang Tsai accepted Ming-tao's words, and consequently there are as many who live according to them among the Kuanchung scholars as among the men of Loyang. If you trace their ideas to the source, they originated with Ming-tao."

(YS, 367/1f, 7)

But it is clear that some degree of rivalry between the Kuanchung and Loyang schools is reflected in these claims. Chang Tsai's disciples dispersed soon after his death, several joining the Ch'éng school, which thus became the ancestor of all later Neo-Confucianism. It is therefore natural that the point of view of the Loyang school should have prevailed whether it was justified or not. Many modern scholars find reason to question it.<sup>2</sup> The earliest direct statement on the point is found in the report of the acts of Chang Tsai written by his disciple Lü Ta-lin, who went over to the Ch'éng school in 1079:<sup>3</sup>

"Then he went on to look for the truth in Buddhist and Taoist writings, and spent several years gaining a thorough knowledge of their doctrines. But realizing that he was making no progress, he returned to seek it in the six classics. At the beginning of Chia-yu (1056-63) he met the Ch'éng brothers of Loyang in the capital, and together they discussed the essentials of philosophy (*tao-hsüeh* 道學). He became fully settled in his convictions and said: 'Our way [Confucianism] is complete in itself; there is no need to seek outside it.' *He abandoned all he had learned and learned from them.*"<sup>4</sup>

#### APPENDICES

But this statement was directly repudiated by Yi-ch'uan himself:

"Lü Ta-lin, writing the report of the acts of Chang Tsai, says that on meeting the two Ch'êngs he abandoned all that he had learned. When Yin T'un mentioned this, Yi-ch'uan said: 'It is reasonable to say that there were points in common between his life-long opinions and those of my brother and myself; but it is untrue to say that he learned from us. I recently charged Lü Ta-lin to cut out the statement, and had no idea that it is still included. This is little short of unscrupulous.' (WS, 11/4A/7-9)

The sentence criticized was evidently emended under Yi-ch'uan's influence, for in the extant text<sup>4</sup> it reads "Then he abandoned all his heterodox doctrines and became a pure (Confucian)". But even this is hardly consistent with what Yi-ch'uan says. In any case Lü Ta-lin's account admits that Chang Tsai was at least in process of abandoning his heresies before he met the Ch'êngs in 1057; and if Ming-tao was himself a heretic for "nearly ten years" after leaving Chou Tun-yi in 1047, it would seem that neither was very far in advance of the other in this matter.

Chang Tsai was twelve years older than the elder of the Ch'êngs; they did not begin teaching in Loyang until about the time of his death in 1077, and very few of their surviving sayings and writings are earlier than this date; his works scarcely ever mention them, while theirs constantly refer to him. If we explain the relationship by one-sided dependence, we can hardly avoid giving the priority to Chang Tsai; but it is much more likely that influence was mutual. As we have seen, they first met when taking their examinations, at a time when two of them had only just returned to Confucianism, and their ideas were no doubt still unformed. In 1069 both Ming-tao and Chang Tsai held offices at the capital, and the former sent in a memorial protesting against the latter's dismissal.<sup>5</sup> In 1077 Chang Tsai visited the Ch'êngs at Loyang, and their conversations, which unfortunately seldom touched on philosophy, were fully recorded.<sup>6</sup> During their periods of separation they corresponded; Chang Tsai's letters have perished, but there remain one written by Ming-tao about 1060<sup>7</sup> and two of Yi-ch'uan's, the second dating from 1069.<sup>8</sup> These discuss philosophical differences in a tone of friendly controversy. The sayings of the Ch'êngs frequently refer to Chang Tsai, criticizing many of his opinions but expressing unlimited admiration for his *West Inscription*.<sup>9</sup>

## TWO CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 87/6.<sup>2</sup> Watanabe, 458-9. Forke, 57. Lin K'o-t'ang, 4f.<sup>3</sup> YS, ch. 2A, Heading.<sup>4</sup> CTCS, 312/8-10, restoring the original reading of the last sentence as given by Chu Hsi (WS, 11/4A/9n).

The term *tao-hsüeh*, "science of the Way", by which Neo-Confucianism came to be known, was already used by Chang Tsai<sup>5</sup> (CTCS, 275/5) and the Ch'êngs (YCWC, 7/9B/11, 10B/2, YS, 33/2) to indicate the true Confucian philosophy lost after the death of Mencius and rediscovered by themselves. Its use was continued in the twelfth century by the Ch'êng school and its offshoots, for example by Yang Shih (*Yang Kuei-shan chi*, 81/5, 82/4), Hu An-kuo (YS, 380/5), Hu Hung (CLHC, 131/5, 8), and Ch'i K'u'an (CLHC, 132/13).

<sup>5</sup> MTWC, 2/2A.<sup>6</sup> YS, ch. 10.

<sup>7</sup> MTWC, 3/1AB, the *Letter on Stabilizing the Nature*. This was written at some time after Ming-tao took up his first office (1B/7), which was at Hu in 1058 (MTWC, 1/1B/1, 4). His disciple Yu Tso implies that it was not long after (YS, 367/2), and Chu Hsi says it was written at Hu (*Chu-tzü ch'üan-shu*, 45/10A/9). Another assertion of Chu Hsi, that he wrote it at the age of 22 or 23 (1053-4), is clearly mistaken (YL, 93/9A/10).

<sup>8</sup> YCWC, 5/4A-5A. The second implies that Ming-tao and Chang Tsai were in the capital but Yi-ch'uan was not (4B/5f), which seems to have been the case only in 1069, cf. Yao Ming-ta, 61f.

<sup>9</sup> The *West Inscription* is CTCS, ch. 1. The Ch'êngs gave it to their disciples with the *Great Learning* (WS, 12/13B/10), and thought it the best thing written since Mencius (YS, 39/4-6, 41/9, 217/14-218/2). Towards other writings of his they are more often critical than otherwise. See, for example (the passages discussed are sometimes given more fully in the *Ts'u-i-yen* than in the *Yi-shu*):

YS, 22/9-11	on CTCS, 44/6
71/1f	22/4, etc.
133/13 (TY, 2/24A/10-12)	24/3
143/6	45/13
225/6-9 (TY, 2/22B/5)	80/15f
290/7 (TY, 2/31B/1-3)	52/6
WS, 12/17B/4	39/8
YCWC, 5/4A/9	24/1

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APPENDIX V  
SELECTIVE INDEX OF TECHNICAL TERMS

(A) In the following cases the Chinese word is always represented by, and is the only one represented by, the given English word or words, except when expressly indicated, and in non-philosophical uses of *ch'ing*, *hsin* and *tao*.

*Ch'eng* 誠, integrity, I, ch. 6; pp. 19, 46, 60 (n.42), 75 f., 98, 100 f., 117

*Ch'i* 氣, ether, I, ch. 3; pp. xv–xx, 4, 48–51, 57 f., 59 (n.24), 65, 84, 116, 121, 129–134, 163

*Ch'i-chih chih hsing* 氣質之性, physical nature, pp. 49; 133, 136

*Ching* 敬, reverence, composure, I, ch. 6; pp. 87, 89, 101, 165f.

*Ch'ing* 情, passion(s), pp. 50–55; 60 (n.35), 61, 65, 85 f., 102–107

*Chung* 中, equilibrium, the mean, pp. 51 f.; 40 f., 46, 129

*Hsiang* 象, image, pp. 19–21; 116, 121, 154 f., 159

*Hsin* 心, mind, heart, I, ch. 5; pp. xv, 36–38, 67–72, 121, 154

*Hsing* 性, nature, I, ch. 4; pp. xv, 62–65, 67; II, ch. 5

*Jen* 仁, benevolence, II, ch. 1; pp. 53–56, 111, 165

*Kè-wu* 格物, investigation of things, I, ch. 7; pp. xviii–xx, 3 f., 16, 101

*Li* 理, principle, I, ch. 1; *passim*

*Ming* 命, decree, I, ch. 2; pp. xiv, 13, 47, 49, 62, 74 f.

*Shén* 神, psychic, II, ch. 2; pp. 121, 154

*Ssü-tuan* 四端, four beginnings, pp. 53–55; 97

*T'ai-chi* 太極, Supreme Ultimate, pp. 169 (n.6); xv, xvii–xix, 109, 144, 153–156, 160, 162–164, 166–168

*T'ai-hsü* 太虛, Supreme Void, pp. 121; xviii, 12, 14, 34, 116, 125

*Tao* 道, Way, pp. 11 f.; xiv, xvii, 14, 18, 23 f., 29, 52, 64 f., 112 f., 122–124, 131–136

*Tao-li* 道理, principle (*tao-li*), pp. 8, 13, 15 f., 28, 30 (n.9), 55, 123, 127

*Té* 德, virtue, power, pp. 80 f.; 112, 116

*Ti* 帝, God, pp. 24; 117

*T'ien* 天, heaven, pp. 23 f.; xiv, 11, 49, 63

*T's'ai* 才, talent, pp. 48–50; 91, 133

*Wu ch'ang* 五常, five norms, pp. 48; 53–58, 97

*Yi* 義, as one of the *wu ch'ang*, duty; contrasted with *ming* and *ching*, morality.

*Yi* 易, the Changes, II, ch. 2

(B) In the following cases the rule given for A is strictly observed when the English words are in italics, but otherwise only when the paired terms are used in conjunction.

*Hsing erh shang* 形而上 and *Hsing erh hsia* 形而下, *above form* and *below form*, pp. 122-124; 34

*Kan* 感 and *Ying* 應, stimulate and respond, pp. 38 f.; 15, 21, 64 f., 104

*Kung* 公 and *Ssu* 私, disinterested and selfish, p. 97

*Shih* 實 and *Hsü* 虛, solid and void, real and unreal, pp. 14; 41, 67, 70 f., 76, 116, 120, 125

*T'i* 體 and *Yung* 用, substance and function, pp. 39 f.; 18, 43 (n.28), 51, 61, 63, 65, 72, 100, 113, 116 f., 121, 166

*Wu* 物 and *Shih* 事, thing and activity, pp. 16 f.; 34 f., 41, 74

*Yin* 陰 and *Yang* 陽, *Yin* and *Yang*, pp. 31-33; 10 f., 35, 39, 42, 58, II, ch. 4, 122 f.

(C) The following terms are irregularly translated and often transliterated.

*Chu* 主, pp. 58-72; 166

*Shêng* 生, pp. 47; 36, 108, 110 f., 120

*So-yi (jan)* 所以(然), pp. 8 f.; 22 (n.3, 4), 29, 84, 122

*Tang-jan* 當然, pp. 8 f.; 17, 29

*Tzù-jan* 自然, pp. 13, 20, 23 f., 49

*T'ui* 推, pp. 9-11; 22 (n.5), 36, 58, 61, 78 f., 106, 124

APPENDIX VI  
INDEX OF PROPER NAMES

- Bruce, J. Percy*, pp. 12, 31, 35, 69, 161, 169 (n.6), 179
- Chang Ch'i* 張圮 (*Sung*), p. 148
- Chang Chiu-ch'eng* 張九成, *T. Tzü-shao* 子韶 (*Hêng-fu* 橫甫) (1092–1159), p. 109
- Chang Hsün* 張峋, *T. Tzü-chien* 子堅 (*Sung*), p. 109
- Chang Li* 張理, *T. Chung-ch'un* 仲純 (*Yüan*), pp. 169 (n.11), 185
- Chang Po-hsing* 張伯行, *T. Hsiao-hsien* 孝先 (1652–1725), pp. 148, 182
- Chang Shih* 張栻, *T. Ching-fu* 敬夫 (*Nan-hsüan* 南軒) (1133–80), pp. 143 f., 145 f., 150 (n.27), 164, 184
- Chang Tsai* 張載, *T. Tzü-hou* 子厚 (*Hêng-ch'u* 橫渠) (1020–77), pp. xi, xv–xx, 3, 10 f., 14, 19 f., 22 (n.17), 25, 34 f., 39, 46 f., 49, 51, 59 (n.26), 65, 74, 81 (n.4), 99 f., 102, 108 f., 111, 115 f., 120 f., 133, 136, 142, 149 (n.2), 152, 156–9, 161 f., 164–8, 173 (n.30), Appendix 3, 182
- Chang Yung* 張詠, *T. Fu-chih* 復之 (*Chung-ting* 忠定, *Kuai-ya* 乖崖) (931–1000), pp. 171 (n.18), 185
- Ch'ang Tsung* 常摶, *Tsung Lao* 摶老, p. 59 (n.6)
- Ch'ao Yüeh-chih* 晁說之, *T. Yi-tao* 以道 (*Ching-yü* 景迂) (1059–1129), pp. 39, 63, 149 (n.1), 154, 160, 168 (n.3), 169 (n.11), 170 f. (n.15), 182, 185
- Chê-tsung* 哲宗 (Emperor 1086–1100), p. xvi
- Ch'êن Chi-ju* 陳繼儒 (1558–1639), p. 184
- Ch'ên Ch'un* 陳淳, *T. An-ch'ing* 安卿 (*Pei-hsi* 北溪) (1153–1217), pp. 13 f., 17, 40, 184
- Ch'ên Chung-fan* 陳鍾凡, pp. 3, 111, 150 (n.11), 161, 180
- Ch'ên Hsüan* 陳宣, *T. Wén-tê* 文德 (*Ming*), p. 148
- Ch'ên Kuan* 陳瓘, *T. Ying-chung* 穎中 (1060–1124), p. 169 (n.5)
- Ch'ên Kuei-yi* 陳貴一, *T. Ching-chêng* 經正 (*Sung*), p. 99
- Ch'ên T'uan* 陳搏, *T. T'u-nan* 圖南 (*Hsi-yi* 希夷) (d. 989), pp. xv, 153, 155–9, 167, 168 (n.3), 169 f. (n.11), 170 (n.13), 171 (n.15), 171 f. (n.18), 183
- Chêng Hsüan* 鄭玄, *T. Kang-ch'eng* 康成 (127–200), pp. 174 (n.42), 182

- Ch'êng Hao* 程顥, *T. Po-ch'un* 伯淳 (*Ming-tao* 明道) (1032-85);  
passim
- Ch'êng Tuan-ch'üeh* 程端慤 (1064-8), p. 136
- Ch'êng Tuan-chung* 程端中, p. 143
- Ch'êng Yi* 程頤, *T. Chéng-shu* 正叔 (*Yi-ch'uan* 伊川) (1033-1107),  
passim
- Ch'i K'u'an* 邱寬, *T. Chü-chih* 居之 (*Sung*), pp. 166 f., 174 (n.60, 63),  
178 (n.4)
- Ch'ien Mu* 錢穆, pp. 161, 173 (n.36), 180
- Chou Tun-yi* 周敦頤 (changed from *Tun-shih* 敦實 1063), *T. Mao-*  
*shu* 茂叔, (*Lien-hsi* 淩溪, *Yüan-kung* 元公 (1017-73), pp. xv,  
xvii-xix, 3, 11, 32, 46, 51, 60 (n.42), 108 f., 111, 113, 120 f., 144;  
Appendix 2; 182, 185
- Chow Yih-ch'ing*, pp. 172 (n.18), 179
- Chu Chén* 朱震, *T. Tzú-fa* 子發 (*Han-shang* 漢上), (d. 1137),  
pp. 156 f., 167, 168 (n.3), 170 f. (n.15), 171 f. (n.18), 174 (n.63), 183
- Chu Hsi* 朱熹, *T. Yüan-hui* 元晦 and *Chung-hui* 仲晦 (*Hui-an*  
晦菴) (1130-1200), pp. xix, 182 f., 185; passim
- Chu Kuang-t'ing* 朱光庭, *T. Kung-shan* 公掞 (1037-94), p. 157
- Chu Yi-tsun* 朱鼎尊, *T. Hsi-ch'ang* 謢鬯 (1629-1709), pp. 161,  
171 (n.18), 173 (n.36), 184
- Chuang-tzú* 莊子, pp. xxi (n.3), 10, 86 f., 89, 128, 159
- Chung Hui* 鍾會, *T. Shih-chi* 士季 (225-64), p. 157
- Ch'ung Fang*\* 种放, *T. Ming-yi* 明逸 (d. 1015), pp. 157, 168 (n.3),  
169 (n.3), 170 (n.13), 171 (n.15)
- Demiéville, P.*, pp. 21 (n.1), 179
- Fan Chung-yen* 范仲淹, *T. Hsi-wén* 希文 (*Wén-chêng* 文正) (989-  
1052), pp. xv, xvi, 161, 167, 183
- Fan O-ch'ang* 范誦昌 (*Sung*), pp. 155, 157, 170 f. (n.15)
- Féng Yu-lan* 馮友蘭, pp. 3, 13, 60 (n.42), 125 (n.8), 152, 161, 164,  
168 (n.1), 172 (n.18), 174 (n.48), 179 f.
- Forke, Alfred*, pp. 125, 142, 149 (n.5), 161, 170 (n.11), 173 (n.19),  
178 (n.2), 179
- Gotô Toshimizu* 後藤俊瑞, pp. 150 (n.11), 180 f.
- Graf, O.*, pp. 149, 173 (n.19), 179
- Han Wei* 韓維, *T. Ch'ih-kuo* 持國 (1017-98), pp. xx (n.2 f.), 131,  
184
- Han Yü* 韓愈, *T. T'ui-chih* 退之 (768-824), pp. xv, xx (n.1), 28, 45,  
50, 59 (n.27), 158, 162, 167, 183

APPENDICES

- Hou Chung-liang* 候仲良, *T. Shih-shéng* 師聖 (*Sung*), pp. xviii, 34, 167, 174 f. (n.63)
- Hou Ko* 候可, *T. Wu-k'o* 無可 (1007–79), pp. 175 (n.63).
- Hsieh Liang-tso* 謝良佐, *T. Hsien-tao* 顯道 (*Shang-ts'ai* 上蔡) (d. c.1121),<sup>1</sup> pp. 47, 64 f., 111, 166, 184
- Hsieh Wu-liang* 謝無量, pp. 125 (n.8), 181
- Hsü Chi* 徐積, *T. Chung-chü* 仲車 (1028–1103), p. 68
- Hsü Chien* 許堅, *T. Chieh-shih* 介石 (*T'ang*), pp. 157, 171 (n.15)
- Hsü Hang* 許沆, *T. Té-ku* 德古 (1058–1115), p. 171 (n.15)
- Hsü Héng* 許衡, *T. Chung-p'ing* 仲平 (1209–81), pp. 8, 29, 184
- Hsü Pi-ta* 徐必達, *T. Té-fu* 德夫 and *Hsüan-chang* 玄仗 (*Ming*), pp. 146, 148, 150 (n.12, 23), 183
- Hsü Yü-féng* 許毓峯, pp. 173 (n.34, 38), 174 (n.46), 181
- Hsün-tzü* 荀子, pp. xiv, xv, 13, 22 (n.5), 44 f., 49
- Hsün Yüeh* 荀悅, *T. Chung-yü* 仲豫 (148–209), pp. 45, 184
- Hu An-kuo* 胡安國, *T. K'ang-hou* 康侯 (*Wén-ting* 文定) (1074–1138), pp. 45, 59 (n.6), 143, 147, 157, 173 (n.23), 178 (n.4)
- Hu Hung* 胡宏, *T. Jén-chung* 仁仲 (*Wu-féng* 五峰) (dates unknown; son of *An-kuo* and younger brother of *Yin*), pp. xviii, 34, 45, 51, 65, 82 (n.10), 145, 158, 167, 174 (n.63), 178 (n.4), 184 f.
- Hu Wei* 胡渭, *T. Fei-ming* 腦明 or *Tung-ch'iao* 東樵 (1633–1714), pp. 169 (n.11), 186
- Hu Yin* 胡寅, *T. Ming-chung* 明仲 (1098–1156),<sup>2</sup> pp. 84, 147, 150 (n.27), 151 (n.28), 183
- Hu Yuan* 胡瑗, *T. Yi-chih* 翼之 (*An-ting* 安定) (993–1059), pp. xv, xvi, 143, 158, 161, 164, 167, 173 f. (n.38)
- Huang Tsung-yen* 黃宗炎, *T. Hui-mu* 晦木 and *Li-ch'i* 立谿 (1616–86), pp. 171 (n.18), 185
- Ingen* 隱元 (1592–1673), p. 170 (n.11)
- Itō Tōgai* 伊藤東涯 (1670–1736), p. 184
- K'ang Shao-tsung* 康紹宗, *T. Hsiao-lung* 孝隆 (*Ming*), p. 148
- Kao-tzü* 告子, pp. 45, 47 f., 57, 118 (n.5), 133 f.
- Kao Yüan-chü* 高元翠, p. 167
- Kuan Lang* 關朗, *T. Tzü-ming* 子明 (Six Dynasties), pp. 28, 30 (n.11)
- Kuan Tao-chung* 管道中, pp. 150 (n.11), 161, 173 (n.36), 181
- Kung-sun Lung* 公孫龍, pp. xiii, 22 (n.11)
- Kuo Chung-hsiao* 郭忠孝, *T. Li-chih* 立之 (*Sung*), pp. 113, 158
- Kuo Yung* 郭雍, *T. Tzü-ho* 子和 (1104–1200), pp. 113, 158, 184
- Lao-tzü* 老子, pp. xvii, xxi (n.3), 70, 121, 159

- Le Gall, S.*, pp. 33–35, 180
- Legge, James*, pp. 47, 74, 96, 180
- Lei Ssü-ch'i* 雷思齊, *T. Ch'i-hsien* 齊賢 (*Yüan*), pp. 169 (n.11), 170 (n.15), 186
- Li Ao* 李翹, *T. Hsi-chih* 翹之 (*T'ang*), pp. 58 (n.1), 184
- Li Chih-ts'ai* 李之才, *T. T'ing-chih* 挺之 (d. 1045),<sup>3</sup> pp. 153, 157, 169 (n.3)
- Li Ch'ing-ch'en* 李清臣, *T. Pang-chih* 邦直 (1032–1102), p. 68
- Li Ch'u-p'ing* 李初平 (d. 1049), pp. 162, 173 (n.34)
- Li Ch'u-yüeh* 李處約 (*Sung*), p. 171 (n.15)
- Li Han* 李瀚 (*Ming*), pp. 148, 151 (n.30 f.)
- Li Huang* 李滉, *T. Ching-hao* 景浩 (1501–72), pp. 150 (n.27), 185
- Li Kai* 李溉 (*Sung*), pp. 157, 171 (n.15)
- Li Kou* 李觀, *T. T'ai-po* 泰伯 (1009–77), pp. 45, 182
- Li Min-chih* 李敏之, *T. Chung-t'ung* 仲通 (d. 1066), p. 136
- Li Shu* 李淑, *T. Hsien-ch'en* 獻臣 (*Sung*), p. 169 (n.11)
- Li T'ung* 李侗, *T. Yüan-chung* 愿仲 (*Yen-p'ing* 延平), (1093–1163), pp. xviii, 163, 168, 184
- Li Wén-ta* 李文達 (*Ming*), p. 148
- Li Yü* 李顥, *T. Tuan-po* 端伯 (*Sung*), p. 131
- Li Yüan-kang* 李元綱, *T. Kuo-chi* 國紀 (*Sung*), pp. 173 (n.24), 184
- Lin K'o-t'ang* 林科棠, pp. xxi (n.3), 60 (n.43), 178 (n.2), 181
- Ling Yüan* 靈源, *Wei-ch'ing ch'an shih* 惟清禪師 (d. 1117), p. xxi (n.3).
- Liu An-chieh* 劉安節, *T. Yüan-ch'eng* 元承 (*Sung*), p. 51
- Liu Hsüan* 劉絢, *T. Chih-fu* 賴夫 (1046–88), pp. 72, 145
- Liu Kung* 劉珙, *T. Kung-fu* 共父 (甫) (1122–78), p. 143
- Liu Mu* 劉牧, *T. Chang-min* 長民 (*Sung*), pp. xv, 108, 120, 155–160, 162 f., 167, 170 (n.14 f.), 173 (n.30), 186
- Liu Mu* 劉牧, *T. Hsien-chih* 先之 (1011–64), pp. 170 (n.14)
- Liu Yin* 劉因, *T. Mêng-chi* 夢吉 (1249–93), pp. 169 (n.11), 171 (n.18), 182
- Lo Ts'ung-yen* 羅從彥, *T. Chung-su* 仲素 (1072–1135), pp. xix, 168, 184
- Lu Chiu-yüan* 陸九淵, *T. Tzü-ching* 子靜 (*Hsiang-shan* 象山) (1139–92), pp. xx, 43 (n.28), 66, 75, 122, 144, 164, 171 (n.18), 174 (n.60), 183
- Lü Ta-lin* 呂大臨, *T. Yü-shu* 輿叔 (*Lan-t'ien* 藍田) (1046/7–92/3),<sup>4</sup> pp. 19, 21, 40, 52, 66, 70, 141, 145, 176 f., 184

APPENDICES

- Lü Tsu-ch'ien* 呂祖謙, *T. Po-kung* 伯恭 (*Tung-lai* 東萊) (1137-81), pp. 142, 169 (n.11), 182, 184
- Mao Ch'i-ling* 毛奇齡, *T. Ta-k'o* 大可 and *Ch'i-yü* 齊于 (1623-1716), pp. 171 (n.18), 183
- Mencius* 孟子, pp. xiv, xv, xx (n.1), 15, 17, 23, 25 f., 37, 44-49, 53-55, 59 (n.7), 61-3, 71, 80, 83, 87, 100 f., 103, 115, 119, 132, 158, 162, 165, 167, 173 (n.24), 178 (n.4, 9)
- Ming-tao*, see *Ch'êng Hao* \*
- Mo-tzû* 墨子, pp. xiii, xx (n.1), 83, 86, 127
- Mu Hsiu* 穆修, *T. Po-ch'ang* 伯長 (979-1032), pp. 153, 156 f., 168 (n.3), 170 (n.13), 171 (n.18), 183
- Nakamura Tekisai* 中村惕齋 (1629-1702), p. 182
- Needham, Joseph*, pp. ix, x, 12, 125 (n.2), 169 (n.6), 172 (n.19), 180
- Oe Bunjō* 大江文城, pp. 170 (n.11), 181
- Ou-yang Hsiu* 歐陽修, *T. Yung-shu* 永叔 (1007-72), pp. 46, 184
- P'an Ch'un* 潘淳, *T. Tzû-chên* 子真 (*Sung*), p. xxi (n.3)
- P'an Hsing-ssü* 潘興嗣, *T. Yen-chih* 延之 (*Sung*), p. 166
- Pao Jo-yü* 鮑若雨, *T. Ju-lin* 汝霖 (*Sung*), p. 91
- P'eng Kang* 彭綱, *T. Hsing-jén* 性仁 (*Ming*), pp. 148, 151 (n.30)
- Shao Po* 邵溥, *T. Tsé-min* 澤民 (d. 1158), pp. 153, 184
- Shao Po-wén* 邵伯溫, *T. Tzû-wén* 子文 (1057-1134), pp. 153, 168 (n.3), 170 f. (n.15), 184 f.
- Shao Yung* 邵雍, *T. Yao-fu* 堯夫 (*K'ang-chieh* 康節), (1011-77), pp. xv, 27, 74, 108-11, 117, 120 f., 152-7, 159-62, 166-8, 169 (n.5, 11), 170 (n.11), 173 (n.30), 184 f.
- Shih Tun* 石訥, *T. Tzû-chung* 子重 (*K'o-chai* 克齋) (Graduated 1145), p. 183
- Ssü-ma Kuang* 司馬光, *T. Chün-shih* 君實 (1019-86), pp. 45, 59 (n.7), 74, 162, 185
- Su Shih* 蘇軾, *T. Tzû-chan* 子瞻 (*Tung-p'o* 東坡) (1036-1101), pp. 46, 135, 185
- Sun Fu* 孫復, *T. Ming-fu* 明復 (992-1057), pp. 158
- Sung Lien* 宋濂, *T. Ching-lien* 景濂 (1310-81), pp. 146, 185
- Tai Chên* 戴震, *T. Tung-yüan* 東原 (1723-77), pp. xx, 60 (n.43), 122, 124, 184
- Tai Shih-yü* 戴師愈 (*Sung*), p. 170 (n.11)
- Takase Takejirō* 高瀬武次郎, pp. 170 (n.11), 181
- T'an Shan-hsin* 譚善心, *T. Yüan-chih* 元之 (*Yüan*), pp. 143, 148
- T'ang Ti* 唐棣, *T. Yen-ssü* 章思 (*Sung*), p. 91

- Ts'ai, Yung-ch'un*, pp. 149 (n.1, 3); 150 (n.11), 151 (n.28), 180  
*Tsou Yen* 鄒衍, p. 26  
*Tu Cheng* 度正, T. *Chou-ch'ing* 周卿 (*Sung*), pp. 168 (n.3), 170 (n.13)  
*Tu Mu* 杜牧, T. *Mu-chih* 牧之 (b. 803), pp. 58 (n.1), 183  
*Tung Chung-shu* 董仲舒 (*Han*), pp. 45, 158, 183  
*Tzu Kao-tzú* 子高子, p. 146  
*Waley, Arthur*, p. 96  
*Wang An-shih* 王安石, T. *Chieh-fu* 介甫 (父) (*Ching-kung* 荆公) (1021-86), pp. x, xvi, 45 f., 126 (n.11), 170 (n.14), 185  
*Wang Ch'ung* 王充, T. *Chung-jén* 仲任 (27-c.100), pp. 45, 184  
*Wang Pi* 王弼, T. *Fu-ssü* 輔嗣 (226-49), pp. 22 (n.3), 157, 174 (n.55), 182  
*Wang P'in* 王蘋, T. *Hsin-po* 信伯 (1082-1153), pp. 166, 185  
*Wang Shou-jén* 王守仁, T. *Po-an* 伯安 (*Yang-ming* 陽明) (1472-1528), pp. xx, 66, 75, 101, 122, 185  
*Wang Tao* 王道, T. *Ch'ün-fu* 純甫 (1487-1549), pp. 161, 184  
*Wang T'ung* 王通, T. *Chung-yen* 仲淹 (*Wen-chung tzú* 文中子), (583-616), pp. 88, 183  
*Wang Ying-ch'en* 汪應辰, T. *Shêng-hsi* 聖錫 (d. 1176), pp. 161, 185  
*Watanabe Hidekata* 渡邊秀才, pp. 178 (n.2), 182  
*Wei Ch'i* 衛琪 (*Yüan*), pp. 172 (n.18), 186  
*Wu Ch'êng* 吳澄, T. *Yu-ch'ing* 幼清 (1249-1333), p. 21 (n.2)  
*Yamazaki Åtsai* 山崎闡齋 (1618-82), pp. 150 (n.27), 185  
*Yang Chu* 楊朱, pp. xiii, 83, 86, 127  
*Yang Hsiung* 楊雄, T. *Tzú-yün* 子雲 (52B.C.-A.D.18), pp. 44 f., 49, 158, 183  
*Yang Lien* 楊廉, T. *Fang-chên* 方震 (*Yüeh-hu* 月湖) (1452-1525), pp. 147, 150 (n.27)  
*Yang Shih* 楊時, T. *Chung-li* 中立 (*Kuei-shan* 龜山) (1053-1135), pp. xviii, xix, xx, 34, 59 (n.6), 82 (n.12), 84, 101, 109, 136, 143, 146 f., 150 (n.27), 166, 168, 169 (n.5), 171 (n.15), 176, 178 (n.4), 184 f.  
*Yao Ming-ta* 姚名達, pp. 161, 173 (n.36), 178 (n.8), 182  
*Yasui Kotarō* 安井小太郎, pp. 60 (n.43), 175 (n.65), 182  
*Yen Yü-hsi* 閻禹錫, T. *Tzú-yü* 子與 (1426-76), p. 148  
*Yi-ch'u'an*, see *Ch'êng Yi*  
*Yin T'un* 尹焞, T. *Yen-ming* 毅明 and *Té-ch'ung* 德充 (*Ho-ching* 和靖) (1071-1142), pp. 70, 143, 145, 166 f., 177, 186

## APPENDICES

- Yu Tso 游酢, *T. Ting-fu* 定夫 (1053–1123), pp. 166, 169 (n.5), 176, 178 (n.7), 186  
Yüan Jén-lin 袁仁林 (*Chén-ch'ien* 振千) (*Ch'ing*), pp. 43 (n.28), 183

## NOTES

1. In his epitaph on Yu Tso (d. 1123), Yang Shih refers to Yu Tso's friendship with Hsieh Liang-tso and remarks that "within three years the two of them have died one after the other" (*Yang Kuei-shan chi* 117/9).
2. These dates are taken from the *Fu-chien t'ung-chih* 福建通志 47/20B/6 f. The date of birth is confirmed by a statement of Hu Yin himself (*Fei-jan chi* 19/8A/6 f.).
3. Biography of Li Chih-ts'ai by Ch'ao Yüeh-chih, *Sung-shan wén-chi* 19/18A/1.
4. According to his official biography (*Sung History* 宋史 SPPY 340/17A/1) Lü Ta-lin died in the Yüan-yü period (1086–93). Although Chu Hsi says that he died before 1091 (YS, contents, note on ch.15), his preface to the *K'ao-ku t'u* is dated 1092. The seventeenth century *Sung Yüan hsieh-an* (9/54/2) gives his age at death as forty-seven.





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